

SHORT STORIES

EDITED BY
C. ARTHUR PEARSON

(OF PEARSON'S WEEKLY)

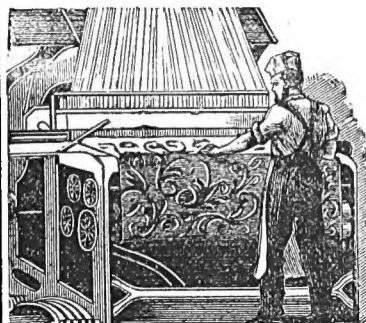
No. 358.

FOR WEEK ENDING NOVEMBER 9TH, 1895.

[ONE PENNY.]

BE SURE TO CUT

10,000 RUGS GIVEN AWAY.



THIS PHENOMENAL OFFER is made to the readers of SHORT STORIES only. On receipt of this advertisement, accompanied by Postal Order for 6s. or 74 stamps, we will forward DIRECT FROM OUR LOOMS to your address, one of our genuine SEAMLESS WOVEN REVERSIBLE CARPETS, suitable for Drawing-room, Dining-room, Bedroom, etc., handsomely bordered, and woven in thirty different patterns and art colourings to suit all requirements, and LARGE ENOUGH TO COVER ANY ORDINARY-SIZED ROOM. These Carpets are manufactured from a material equal in wear to wool, and are undoubtedly the cheapest in the world.

With every Carpet we shall ABSOLUTELY GIVE AWAY a very handsome Rug to match, or we will send two CARPETS and Two RUGS for 10s. 6d.

MONEY WILLINGLY RETURNED IF NOT APPROVED.

The Queen says: "Decidedly stouter and handsomer than any of the kind, the price being the astounding part of the matter." Schoolmistress: "For style, durability, and cheapness they cannot be beaten." Penny Illustrated Paper: "Manufactured in every variety of colour, and is one of the most surprising bargains I have seen." Church Bell: "Truly wonderful value."

Thousands of Testimonials similar to the following, and Repeat Orders have been received from our Customers.

"18, Clarendon Villas,

"West Brighton.

"DEAR SIR,—I beg to thank you for your prompt attention to my wire of Friday. The Carpet came duly to hand on Saturday, and I am exceedingly pleased with it, so much so that I purpose calling at your warehouse one day this week, when I expect to be in town, to see if I can supply myself with two more to suit my present requirements.—Yours faithfully, W. HEATH, HAYWOOD."

This offer is made to the readers of this paper only, and may not be repeated. All orders despatched same day as received. Cheques and Postal Orders to be crossed "Union Bank," and made payable to J. HARGREAVES, Sec. Established 1872.

The BRITISH CARPET WEAVING CO.,

31, OLD STREET, LONDON, E.C.

NOT APPEAR AGAIN.

THIS CUT.

MASON'S EXTRACT OF HERBS

For the Immediate Production of

BOTANIC BEER.

A Nine-gallon Cask of Alcoholic Beer from a Brewery will cost you 10/6, but Eight Gallons of Beer made from

Mason's



EXTRACT OF HERBS

Can be obtained for 6d., plus a pound or two of Sugar and a little Yeast.

THE
**FINEST BEVERAGE
IN THE WORLD.**

Inventors and Manufacturers:

Newball & Mason,

HYSON GREEN WORKS,
Nottingham.

If unable to obtain it in your neighbourhood, send 9 stamps for sample bottle; or samples of both Wine Essence and Extract of Herbs, post free for 15 stamps.

DEVONSHIRE CREAM.

(REALLY GENUINE.)

In Patent Air-tight Tins, 1lb., 1s. 2d.; 1lb., 2s.; 2lbs., 3s. 9d., including Tin and Postage.

MRS. CONYERS, KILKHAMPTON, STRATTON, N. DEVON.

"WORTH A GUINEA A BOX."

BEECHAM'S PILLS

FOR ALL

BILIOUS & NERVOUS DISORDERS,

SUCH AS

**Sick Headache, Constipation,
Weak Stomach, Impaired Digestion,
Disordered Liver & Female Ailments.**

ANNUAL SALE SIX MILLION BOXES.

In Boxes, 9d., 1s. 1d., and 2s. 9d. each, with full directions.

Prepared only by the Proprietor,

THOMAS BEECHAM, St. Helens, Lancashire.

Sold by all Druggists and Patent Medicine Dealers everywhere.

BLUSHING

Permanently cured. A Pamphlet giving sound practical advice and particulars of a successful treatment for a rapid, simple, and inexpensive home-cure, forwarded free to all upon receipt of stamped addressed envelope.—Prof. B. L. HOLT, Argyl Chambers, West Strand, London.

RED NOSES

Caused by **INDIGESTION** etc. All who suffer from this disgusting complaint should write for DR. HOWELL'S RENOWNED REMEDY, 22, Glasshouse Street, London, W., who guarantees a cure in a few days. 2/6 a box.

HAIR DESTROYED

permanently and absolutely by an entirely new and harmless self-treatment, total destruction guaranteed. Particulars free on receipt of stamped addressed envelope. Prof. F. T. HOLT, Argyl Chambers, West Strand, London.

BLUSHING.

A lady, whose daughter was cured of this in less than a month, will be happy to send particulars to anyone inclosing stamped addressed envelope to Mrs. WILLIAMS, No. 1, County Chambers B., Martineau St., Birmingham.

HAIR DESTROYED.

Absolutely, permanently, painlessly (without extraction, or burning, or cutting off), and without injury to the skin, or to the charge made. Inquiries confidentially solicited. Particulars and testimonials from hospital nurses and others, free. Address Mrs. E. GOULD, 129, New Kent Road, London, S.E.

BLACKHEADS. I guarantee to cure the most stubborn cases when all else has failed. Book of particulars for an inexpensive, harmless, permanent, and certain home cure, post free on receipt of stamped addressed envelope to Mrs. V. EVANS, 18, Union Passage, Birmingham.

DEAFNESS, HEAD NOISES, etc., Absolutely cured in 24 hours, by using one bottle of "Auraline Essence," the Great Indian Discovery. Millions of sufferers cured after all else had failed. Many testimonials. Why remain deaf when a cure awaits you? Send 2/6 to the MACKAY REMEDY CO., 104, High Holborn, London.

THE "ENGLISH" ORGANETTE.



4 MONTHLY

Price 30/- Terms: 4/- deposit & 4/- monthly. Organette delivered when first 4/- is paid.

NOTICE. To each of my Customers I GIVE FREE my Noted Book of Coupons, value 30s. and upwards. This is something new, and surprises everyone. Write for list of music and full particulars. (Mention this Paper.)

J. M. DRAPER, ORGANETTE BLACKBURN WORKS.

ONE BOX

OF

**DR. MACKENZIE'S IMPROVED
HARMLESS COMPLEXION WAFERS**

will produce the most lovely complexion that the imagination could desire. Clear, Fresh, freed from Blotch, Blemish, Coarseness, Redness, Freckles, or Pimples. Sent post free, 4s. 6d. Beware of so-called Complexion Pills being advertised by unscrupulous imitators under the name of Dr. Mackenzie. These Wafers are not pills.

To whiten the hands and skin, use

Dr. Mackenzie's

Arsenical Toilet Soap.

1s. per tablet, 3 for 2s. 6d. Postage, 3d.

S. HARVEY,

5, DENMAN STREET, LONDON BRIDGE, S.E.

(Removed from Balham Hill.)

THE JOHN NOBLE

HALF - GUINEA COSTUMES

Direct from the Largest Firm of Costume Manufacturers in the world, at less than Half Ordinary Prices.

Over 1,000 Well-Paid Workers employed in John Noble's own Factories, under the strictest conditions of Sanitation and cleanliness.

Highest Diploma & Gold Medal Awarded British & Colonial Industrial Exhibition.

These Costumes are made in the John Noble Cheviot Serge (the same quality worn by Miss Becker at the time of her rescue from the disastrous Wreck of the "Elbe," and sold at 7/6 the Dress Length). They are trimmed with bold silk cord, and supplied complete for the ridiculous price of 10/6 each, packed in box and sent carriage paid for 9d. extra. Ordinary stock sizes fit any figure up to 38ins. round bust under arms; larger sizes 1/6 extra.

The JOHN NOBLE MODEL COSTUMES have secured beyond a doubt

THE ADMIRATION OF THE WORLD.

They are far and away ahead of all other Costumes on the market for style, cut, make, finish and quality; the skirts are wider and the sleeves fuller than in the sloped-made "skimp" looking garments generally sold at low prices and often produced by ill-paid workers in the lowest sweating dens, therefore ladies can with confidence place their orders with John Noble Ltd., The Warehouse, Manchester.

KNOCKABOUT PROCS From

FOR GIRLS are also supplied in the

John Noble Cheviot Serge, with

saddle top, long full sleeves, and

pocket, at the following low prices: each.

Lengths 31 24 37 30 33 ins.

Prices 1/6 2/- 2/6 3/- 3/6 ea.

Lengths 36 39 42 45 ins.

Prices 4/- 4/6 5/- 5/6 ea.

Postage 4d. extra.

Every purchaser delighted. The lengths stated are from top of neckband to bottom of skirt in front.

COLOURS: The above garment can be supplied in Black, Navy, Brown, Myrtle, Bronze Green, Electric Blue, Ruby, Tan, Grey, or Drab.

PATTERNS, also "THE BOOK OF THE SERGE," and FASHION SHEETS of up-to-date Costumes, Blouses, Mantles, etc., sent Post Free on application.

BEWARE OF IMITATIONS, which are always inferior, and remember that John Noble Ltd. have no agents, no travellers, or branch shops, and the genuine goods can only be obtained direct from their Manchester establishments.

Please mention "Short Stories" when ordering.

JOHN NOBLE LTD., The Warehouse, MANCHESTER.



10/6

**NOBLE'S NOVELTIES
IN DRESS FABRICS.**

From 4d. to 4/6 per yard.

Large Box containing over 1,000 Patterns post free on approval.

EPPS'S

GRATEFUL—COMFORTING.

COCOA

TOOTH-ACHE

CURED INSTANTLY BY

BUNTER'S

Prevents Decay.

Saves Extraction.

Neuralgic Headache and all

Nerve Pains Removed by

BUNTER'S NERVINE. All

Chemists, 1s. 1d.

NERVINE

NOSE

A RADICAL PERMANENT CURE Medically approved for Red Noses, 3s. 9d. post free, under cover. Pamphlet "Red Noses, Cause and Prevention," 1s. Machines for Ugly Noses. Particulars for stamp. LEES RAY, Specialist, Waverley, Epsom.

TO TOBACCONISTS COMMENCING.

See Illus. Guide and Catalogue (259 pages), 3d. "How to Open a Clear Store," £30 to £5,000. "TOBACCONISTS' OUTFITTING CO., 186, Euston Road, London. (Over 50 years' reputation.) Manager, H. MYERS.

£20

HAIR DESTROYED.

A lady who has permanently destroyed Superfluous Hairs on herself, will be happy to forward free, to all similarly afflicted, full particulars of a simple, inexpensive and harmless self-treatment. Send stamped addressed envelope in confidence to Mrs. "T. D.," 67, Strand, London.



No. 358.]

For the Week ending November 9th, 1895.

[ONE PENNY.]

FOR THE HONOUR OF FRANCE.



BARDON! Madame does not know that this is a smoking carriage?"

"But yes. Monsieur is very good. It is that my husband would smoke. He is an old soldier. He smokes all the time. *Ciel!* they are like chimneys, these old soldiers. This man of mine regrets that he cannot smoke when he is asleep!"

While madame delivered this address she continued also to mount the steps, and as she finished it she seated herself in

the corner of the carriage opposite to me. She was short and round, and sixty years old, and smiling like the sun on a fine day.

In a moment her husband followed her, bowing to me as he entered the carriage. Seating himself beside her, and giving her plump hand a little affectionate pat, he said: "It is all right, little one. Marie will receive her jelly in good condition. I myself saw that the basket was placed right side up in the carriage. The jelly will not spill." Then turning to me he added: "My wife makes a wonderful jelly of apricots, monsieur. We are taking some of it to our married daughter, who lives in Avignon."

He was a well-set-up old boy, with a face most pleasantly frank, close-cut grey hair, short grey whiskers, and a bristling white moustache. Across his forehead, cutting through his right eyebrow, was a desperate scar, that I at once associated in my mind with the red ribbon of the legion that he wore in the buttonhole of his black frock coat. He looked the officer in retreat, and the very gentleness and sweetness of his manner made me sure that he had done some gallant fighting in his time.

As the train pulled out from the station—it was at Tarascon that they had joined me—he drew forth from his pocket a black little wooden pipe and a

tobacco pouch. This was my opportunity. I also drew forth a pipe and a tobacco pouch. "Would monsieur accept some of my tobacco?" I asked. It was tobacco of the Havana.

Monsieur would be pleased to do so.

Then he struck a wax match, and paused to light his pipe. He drew a dozen whiffs in silence, while on his face was the thoughtful look of one whose taste in tobacco was critical, and whose love for it was strong.

"Thunder of guns, but it is good!" he exclaimed, as he took the pipe from his mouth, and passed it lightly back and forth beneath his nose. "Had we smoked tobacco like this in the Crimea we should have whipped those rascally Russians in a single week! Ah, that we often were without tobacco was the hardest part of all. I have smoked coffee grounds and hay, monsieur, and have been thankful to get them—I myself, who well know what is good and what is not good in a pipe! This tobacco—it is divine!"

"Monsieur served in the Crimea?"

"This is a proof of it," he said, a little grimly, touching the scar on his forehead.

"And this," his wife added, touching the bit of red ribbon in his buttonhole. "He was the bravest man in all that war, monsieur, this old husband of mine. His cross was given him by—"

"Tchut, little one! What does monsieur care how I won my cross? It was not much that I did. Any man would have done the same."

"But the others did not do the same. They ran away, and left him to do it alone. Did not his majesty tell you—"

"Ah, monsieur hears what a *babillarde* she is. If she were given her own way, she would swear that I commanded the allied armies, and that I blew up the Redan, and stormed the Malakoff, and captured Sebastopol all alone!"

"Tell monsieur what it was you did," said the little woman warmly. "Tell him truly and precisely what it was

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you did, and then let him judge for himself if what I have said be one bit less than your due."

"And so bring monsieur to know that I am a babbling old woman like thyself?"

He pinched her gently, and then settled himself back against the cushion as though with the intention of giving himself wholly to the enjoyment of his pipe; yet there was a look in his eyes that showed how strong was the desire within him—the desire that is natural to every brave and simple-minded old soldier—to tell the story of his honourable scars. Even had I felt no desire to hear this story, not to have pressed him to tell it would have been cruel. But little pressing was required.

"Since monsieur is good enough to desire to hear what little there is to tell," he said, "and to show him how foolish is this old woman of mine, I will tell him the whole affair. It is a stupid nothing; but monsieur may be amused by the trick that was put upon me by those great generals—yes, that certainly was droll.

"Our regiment was the Twenty-seventh of the Line, and was drawn almost wholly from the towns and villages in these parts. We all were *Provençaux* together, and the men of the other regiments of our division gave us the name of the Provence cats—though why they gave us that foolish name I am sure they never knew any more than we did ourselves. It was not because we were cowards, that I will swear; our regiment did some very pretty fighting in its time, as any one may know by reading the reports which were published in the gazettes of those days.

"Our division held Mont Sapouné—the French right, you know—facing the little Redan across the Carenage Ravine. It was early in the siege, and we had only drawn our first parallel, and partly covering the ground where we dug our rifle-pits later on. But we were going ahead with our work fast, and already we had thrown up the little redoubts known as No. 11 and No. 15, that covered the advancing earthwork leading to where our second parallel was to begin. Redoubt No. 11 was a good hundred yards, and redoubt No. 15 was more than three times that distance outside of our lines; and everybody knew that these two advanced posts would be in great danger until our second parallel was well under way.

"So very possible was it that they might be surprised, and the guns turned on our own lines in support of a general attack, that in each of them spikes and hammers were kept in readiness against the need for spiking the guns before they fell into the enemy's hands. Our regiment lay just behind these redoubts, in the rear of the artillerymen who manned our trenches; and as the gunners had plenty to do all day long, and through the night too sometimes, the work of keeping up the night pickets fell to our share.

"It was while things were this way that I was on picket early one morning on our extreme left, close over the edge of the Carenage Ravine. I had come on with the midnight relief, and by five o'clock in the morning, when day was just breaking, my teeth were chattering and I was stiff with cold. Name of a name, but it was cold those winter mornings! We have nothing like it, even when the worst mistral is blowing, in our winters here in Provence.

"It was while the light was still faint that I thought I heard, coming up through the mist, a little rattling sound, such as might be made by a man stumbling and dropping his musket among the broken rocks. Just then the mist was too thick for me to see twenty feet below me. I was sure that something bad was going on

down there, but I did not want to make a fool of myself by giving a false alarm. All that I could do was to cock my musket and to hold it pointed towards where the sound seemed to come from, all ready—should there be need for it—to give the alarm and get in a shot at the enemy at the same time.

"Truly, monsieur, it seemed to me that I stood like that while my heart went pounding against my ribs, for a whole year. I was no longer cold; the blood was racing through my veins, and I was everywhere in a glow. Suddenly there came a puff of wind, and as the mist thinned for a moment I saw that the whole ravine was full of Russians. Their advance already was half-way up the bank nearest to our works. In less than ten minutes the whole of them would be dashing into our outlying redoubts. As I pulled the trigger of my musket I tried to shout, but my throat was as dry as a furnace, and I could only gasp. And will you believe it? my musket missed fire! Name of a name, what a state I was in! There was the enemy coming on under cover of the mist; and there was I, the only man who could save our army, standing dumb like a useless fool!

"What I must do came to me like a flash. If I ran inside of our lines to give the alarm, the chances were a thousand to one that the enemy would have the outlying redoubt, very likely would have them both, and would turn the guns before help could come. But I knew—at least I hoped—that there was time for me to get to the more exposed redoubt ahead of them and give the word to spike the guns. It was all in an instant, I say, that I found this thought in my mind, and my musket and cartridge-box thrown I don't know where, and myself dashing off through the mist across the broken ground like a deer.

"As I rushed into the redoubt, our men thought that I was the Russians; and when they knew me by my uniform for a Frenchman, and heard me crying in a hoarse whisper: 'Spike the guns!' they thought that I was mad. But the lieutenant in command of the battery had at least a little sense, even if he did not have much courage, and he looked towards where I pointed, and then he saw the shakos, as the mist lifted again, not a hundred feet away.

"'Save yourselves, I will make the guns safe,' he cried to his men—he was not all a coward, poor fellow—and as they ran for it he picked up the spikes and the hammer. Tap, tap, tap! one gun was spiked. Tap, tap, tap! another. Then we heard the Russians beginning to scramble up outside.

"'It can't be done. Run, cat!' he cried, and away he started after his men. The name that I called him as he ran away, monsieur, was a very foul name. God forgive me for what I said! But I was determined that it *should* be done. In a second I had picked up the nails and the hammer, and—tap, tap, tap!—the third gun was safe. 'Run, cat!' I heard the lieutenant call again. But—tap!—I had the nail started in the last gun, and then, right above me, was a Russian major and with him a dozen of his men. Tap! and I had the nail half-way home as the major jumped down beside me, with his sword raised. I knew that I could parry his blow with the hammer and then possibly get away; but I wanted to make sure that the gun could not be turned. And so—it was quick thinking that I did just then, monsieur—tap! and the gun was no better than old iron. At the same instant it seemed to me that the whole world burst into a tremendous roar and ten thousand blazing stars—but it was only the sword of that confounded Russian major banging against my skull!"

The little woman was almost sobbing. She took her husband's hand in both of hers.

"But you see that I was *not* killed, little one," he said; and he raised her hands in his and kissed them.

"It was not until the next day, monsieur," he went on, "that I knew anything. Then I was in the hospital."

"How did it go?" I asked of the hospital steward.

"The Russians were driven back," he said, "and a lot of them were captured. You owe it to the same Russian major who almost killed you that your life was saved. As soon as he was brought into camp, he sent a message to the general begging that you might be looked after quickly. If there was any life left in you, it was worth saving, he said, for you were a brave man—and he told how you had spiked those last two guns. By Jove! but for that message you would have died. When they brought you in here you were nearly gone."

"And the lieutenant who ran away?" I asked.

"Oh, he was killed—as he deserved. Now you know all about it. Hold your tongue."

"I felt so foolishly weak, and there was such a pain in my head as I began to remember it all at once, that I could not ask any more questions. Presently my head began to buzz, and the pain in it grew worse, and then for a week I had a fever that came near to taking me off. But I pulled through"—he squeezed his wife's hand that again had been laid in his—"and in three weeks I was back with the regiment. It was all due to my having such a wonderfully thick skull, the doctors said, the major's sword had not broken it past all mending. When I came into the camp the boys all cheered me, and I was as proud as a cock. And then, the first thing I knew, up came a corporal and a file of men and arrested me."

"What am I arrested for?" I asked.

"For being absent without leave from your regiment during battle," said the corporal, and marched me off to the guard-house. Then I was not proud at all. But I was very angry. That I should be arrested in this fashion did not seem to me fair.

"In half an hour back came the corporal and his file of men. This time they took me to headquarters. In we went, and the corporal stood beside me, and his men behind me in a row. It seemed as though half the officers of our army were there—my colonel, the general of our brigade, the general of our division, half-a-dozen other generals, three or four English officers in their smart red coats. Presently there was a stir, and in came the Emperor! Whatever it all meant I could not tell at all!

"Private Labonne," said my colonel—he spoke in a very harsh tone, yet it seemed to me that there was an odd sort of twinkle in his eye—"you deserted your post, you were absent without leave when your regiment went into action."

"Yes, but—"

"Not a word of excuse, Private Labonne. You know the penalty."

"I did know the penalty, of course. It was to be taken out and shot. I began to think that this was worse than the Russians!

"When shall I order the court martial, your majesty?" asked my colonel.

"I will be the court martial," said the Emperor. "This is a serious matter—this is a matter to be dealt with in a hurry. The case is proved. There is no need for a trial. I order Private Labonne to be shot at once."

"I shivered all down my back. It was worse than the Russians—very much worse."

"Take him away," said my colonel.

"The corporal put his hand on my shoulder, and the guard closed in. 'March!' said the corporal."

"Halt!" said the Emperor. "Private Labonne, before you are taken away and shot, tell me what you were doing in that battery."

"Nothing, your majesty."

"Nothing? I thought that I heard something about guns being spiked. Did you not spike a gun, Private Labonne?"

"Yes, your majesty."

"Did you not spike two guns—and both of them after the gunners and the officer in command of the battery had run away?"

"Yes, your majesty."

"And why did you not run away, too, Private Labonne?"

"Because I wanted to spike the guns, your majesty."

"You did not think, then, that it was your duty as one of my soldiers to save your life by running with the others?"

"This question puzzled me, for I certainly never had thought of the matter in that way at all. It occurred to me that perhaps I had not done my duty. But what the Emperor said, for all that he was the Emperor, did not seem reasonable, and I made bold to answer him: 'If I had taken care of my own life, your majesty, a great many of your soldiers would have died to pay for it. It would have been a bad day's work if those two guns had not been spiked, for the Russians certainly would have turned them on our lines.'

"The Emperor turned to my colonel. 'There is something in what Private Labonne says, eh, colonel? I suppose there really would have been the very mischief to pay had the enemy turned those guns?'

"I suppose there would," said my colonel, a little grimly.

"Then the case is not quite so black against Private Labonne as it at first appeared?"

"Not quite so black," said my colonel.

"Perhaps we need not have him shot, after all?"

"Perhaps not—not this time, at least."

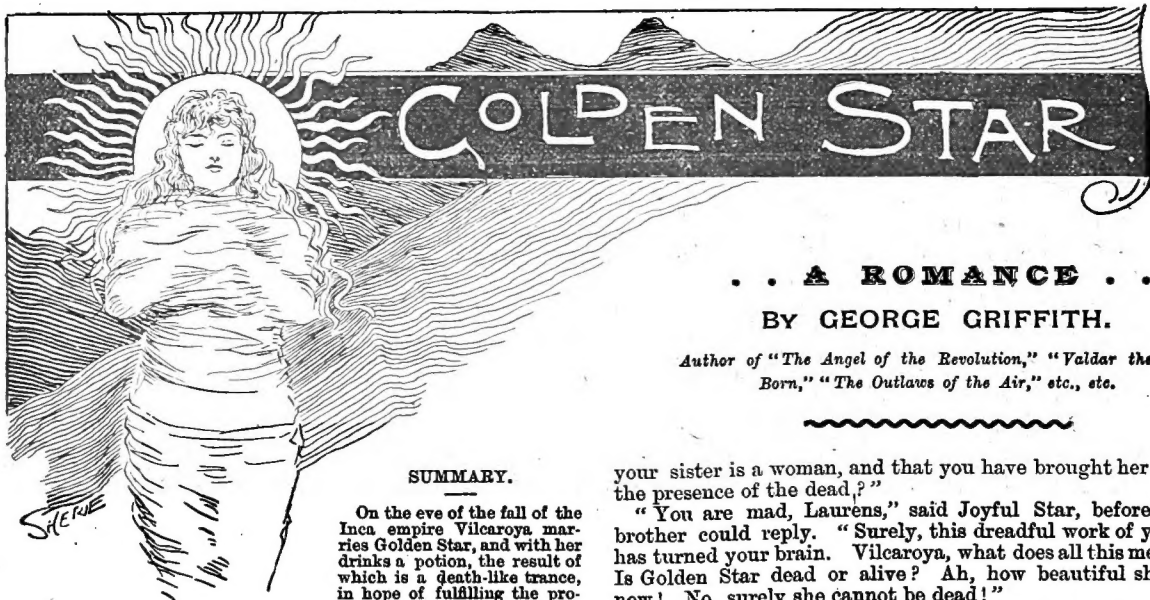
"We might compliment him a little upon his bravery. For it was rather brave—eh, colonel?—to stay in that battery and spike those guns, while a hundred Russians were tumbling in upon him, and his own comrades had run off and left him to do his duty and to die for it there alone?"

"My colonel's voice broke a little as he answered: 'It was very brave, your majesty.'

"Eh, well, Private Labonne," said the Emperor, turning again to me, "we won't shoot you. Your colonel is right about your bravery; and to shoot a brave man, except in battle, is a mistake. The Russian officer who came so near killing you was a major, I am told; well, you may happen to meet him again, and if you do, it is only fair that your rank should equal his. Here is your commission, Major Labonne; and here is a little thing—it was his own cross of the Legion that the Emperor gave me—that I want you to wear in remembrance of that day when you did as brave a piece of work as ever was done by a French soldier for the honour of France!"

"And so you see, monsieur, it was only a comedy about my being shot, after all. Here is Avignon. You must wait for me a moment, little one, while I get the basket of jelly for Marie."

THOMAS JANVIER.



... A ROMANCE ...

BY GEORGE GRIFFITH.

Author of "The Angel of the Revolution," "Valdar the Orphan," "The Outlaws of the Air," etc., etc.

SUMMARY.

On the eve of the fall of the Inca empire Vilcaroia marries Golden Star, and with her drinks a potion, the result of which is a death-like trance, in hope of fulfilling the prophecy that the empire shall be restored by one who has come alive from the grave. Three hundred and sixty years later Professor Lamson brings, as he thinks, Vilcaroia's mummy from Peru to England. His friend Djama believes that he can restore it to life, and does so. Six months later the party return to Peru, Ruth, Djama's sister, going with them. At Panama they meet Hartness, a friend of Lamson's, who joins in the expedition. Arrived in Cuzco, Vilcaroia put himself into communication with the remnant of his people, and prepares to begin his work. He summons one Tupac-Rayca to meet him with twenty others of the old Inca blood on the Rodadero, a plain behind the great fortress. The same night at dinner he accidentally reveals the fact that Golden Star was his sister as well as his wife. It is explained to him that such a union as this is impossible in the modern world. Later on the same night he entices Djama on to the Rodadero and bids his men blindfold him. He then leads them by a way of which he only knows the secret into the Hall of Gold, a subterranean chamber in which some of the treasures of the Incas are hidden, where he dresses himself in the imperial robes, and then, seated on a throne, he receives the oath of allegiance from Tupac and his comrades. He shows Djama the treasures, and promises to load him with them if he will restore Golden Star to life, and threatens him with death if he reveals what he has seen. After this he has some of the gold taken to their lodgings, and with part of this buys a convenient hacienda in the country, and in due course they set out for the resting-place of Golden Star. Her body is found and brought back to the hacienda, and there, when his work is almost finished, Djama refuses to complete it unless Vilcaroia will swear to give Golden Star to him. He refuses, but afterwards consents on condition that Djama will give Ruth to him. He laughs him to scorn, and Vilcaroia draws his dagger and swears that he will drive it into Golden Star's heart unless Djama consents. Djama yields, and Vilcaroia obliges him to go and bring Ruth, the Professor, and Hartness to Golden Star's bedside.

CHAPTER XVII. A WOMAN'S WAY.

"THERE is your royal would-be lover, Ruth! Come, if you don't believe me, you can hear from his own lips that upon you, and you alone, depends Golden Star's return to life. Is not that so, your Highness?"

It was Djama who said this, and as he said it, he caught Joyful Star by the hand, and half led, half dragged her towards me from between the other two. But before he had come half the length of the room, Francis Hartness had overtaken him in a few swift strides. I saw his hand fall heavily on his shoulder, and with his other hand he took Ruth's out of his. His blue eyes were nearly black with anger, and his bronzed face was grey and set and pale with the passion that his strong will was holding back, and his voice was low and clear, and vibrating like the sound of a distant bell when he spoke and said:

"I can't stand that, Djama. Are you forgetting that

your sister is a woman, and that you have brought her into the presence of the dead?"

"You are mad, Laurens," said Joyful Star, before her brother could reply. "Surely, this dreadful work of yours has turned your brain. Vilcaroia, what does all this mean? Is Golden Star dead or alive? Ah, how beautiful she is now! No, surely she cannot be dead!"

She had broken away from both her brother and Francis Hartness, and as she said the last words she was leaning over Golden Star's pillow, softly stroking her hair; and then she stooped lower and kissed her forehead. Then the others came up to the bedside, Francis Hartness and Djama in front, and the Professor standing silent and wondering behind them.

"If Djama won't speak, will you, Vilcaroia?" said Hartness, looking at me with eyes that were still angry. "What is that dagger in your hand for, and what is the meaning of this story that he has been telling me?"

"The meaning is of life or death," I said. "Laurens Djama will not give Golden Star's life back to her if I will not swear to give her to him when she lives again, and I have sworn that he shall not restore her to life unless he swears to give Joyful Star to me, for I love her, and will have neither life nor empire without her."

As I listened to my own voice saying these bold words it seemed to me as though another were speaking, for even in that hot moment of passion and desperate resolve I could scarce believe them mine. For the instant I thought Hartness would have struck me down where I stood, nor could I have used my dagger against him, for he was a man and I loved him, though I saw



Looking at me with eyes that were still angry.

now that we both loved the same woman. But before either of us could move, Ruth had risen erect and come between us, her cheeks burning with shame and her eyes aglow with anger.

"What!" she said, "Laurens give me to you, Vilcaroya! Don't you know yet that an English girl can only give herself, and then only to the man she chooses of her own free will? Do you think I am a slave or a human chattel to be bartered away like that? Nonsense; and you, Captain Hartness, don't look so fiercely at Vilcaroya. Remember that he is your friend and mine, or has been, and has not the same ideas as we have. If he had——"

"He has," I said, breaking in upon her speech, "since Joyful Star has spoken. He is not her lover but her slave, and she has shamed him. I will eat the words that should never have been spoken. Let Golden Star live! I will keep my oath and ask nothing whatever in return."



So the savage within me was tamed, and I, who but a few minutes before had been ready to take two lives at the prompting of a single word, dropped my dagger and stood with bowed head, humble as a chidden child before her whose lightest word was then my most sacred law. I raised my eyes and looked at her to see if my words had pleased her. As our eyes met she gave me a glance that I would have died to win from her, and then, pushing me and Francis Hartness gently aside, yet with a force that

"Mad! Yes, I think I must have been," neither of us could have resisted, she took her brother by the arm and, leading him to the bedside with one hand, she laid the other on Golden Star's brow, and said:

"Laurens, can you really bring her back to life?"

"Yes," he answered, and I could see that he did not dare to raise his eyes to hers, "but——"

"But you will only do it for a price, you think. For shame! Is that the way you use this terrible power that you possess? Is my brother so mean a creature as that? You love her, you say, even as she lies there neither dead nor alive? Well, when she lives, she will be worthy of any man's love, but only of a man's, Laurens, and you would not be a man, with all your learning and power, if you insisted on some mean advantage as your skill gives you. You must be mad, or worse than mad, to be able to look on such beauty as that, knowing that you can restore it to life, and yet ask a price before you will do it. Come, Laurens, that is not like your old self. Use your power with the same generosity that it has been given to you, and then win Golden Star like a man if you can."

Where my strength had been vanquished her sweet wisdom conquered. The man who had laughed at my threats, and told me without a quiver in his voice how he could, and would, slay himself rather than I should do what he knew I could do, stood humbled and abashed before the righteous and yet gently spoken reproach of her who was pleading for the life of a sister woman.

I saw Djama's hands meet behind his back, and his fingers begin to twine about each other. I saw him look from Ruth to Golden Star, from the living woman who was his sister to her lifeless counterpart. Then came over him one of those swift changes of mood which we had so often

seen before. All the cold cruelty of his long chained-up passion vanished. His fate, from being stone, became flesh again. The fierce glitter, as of a sword's point, died out of his eyes, and they grew warm and soft again, and his voice was almost as sweet and gentle as Ruth's, and strangely like it, too, as he answered her and said:

"You are right, Ruth. I was not myself. I was a brute unworthy either of love or power. Let her die! Good God! I would die myself a thousand times rather than do that! Mad! Yes, I think I must have been even to think of such a crime for a moment, but if you were a man and had lived through what I have lived through for the last two days and nights you would understand me and forgive me. Yes, she shall live. How could I ever have thought of letting her die!"

Then he rose from his half-stooping posture over the bed and came to where I stood at the foot, with his hand outstretched and a smile on his lips, and said:

"You have heard what I have just said, Vilcaroya. You have withdrawn your conditions; now I will take back mine. It is no use for you and me to be enemies. We have had our fight and I confess myself beaten. Now let us try to be friends for Ruth's sake and Golden Star's, and by morning I promise you that you shall be telling her the story of your resurrection and her own."

For a moment I stared at him in speechless wonder, striving to understand how it could be that those eyes which had, but so short a time before, been glaring hate at me, could now be looking so kindly and frankly into mine, and how those lips which had just been sneering so coldly and cruelly alike at my love and my hate, could shape such friendly and honest-sounding words. Then I looked at Ruth, asking her with my eyes what she would have me do, and in instant obedience to what I saw took Djama's hand in mine and said:

"So be it. The evil in our hearts has spoken, now let the good that is there speak and let us be friends, and when Golden Star awakes with my lips she shall bless you and her who has made peace between us where there was strife."

"Miss Ruth, you must allow me to congratulate you on your success as a peacemaker," said the Professor, speaking now for the first time since he had come into the room, and coming forward to where Joyful Star still stood by the bedside. "It would have been ten thousand pities if this—ah—this little affair had ended any other way, for all of the exquisite perfect subjects——"

"Subjects, Professor?" said Ruth, interrupting him with a laugh. "Do you venture to call Golden Star a subject, just as you do those awful things in your dissecting rooms? Look at her—a subject indeed! Don't call her that again in my hearing, please!"

"Oh, ah, of course, I beg your pardon a thousand times, and her Highness's too. Really, I spoke quite thoughtlessly and most improperly," he answered, laughing at her mock displeasure. "And now, Djama, since we have had two declarations of love and a peacemaking, don't you think it would be cruel to keep her Highness waiting any longer on the threshold of her new life? Come, Hartness, you and I have no more business here at present. Don't you think we had better go and wait somewhere else for the working of the miracle?"



Then she turned to me.

"Just what I was going to say," replied Hartness, who had gone away a little distance from the bed while we were talking, and had been standing by the table, seeming to examine the strange instruments that were scattered about it. "Of course, the Doctor will wish to finish his work alone."

"May not Vilcaroya and I stay, Laurens?" asked Joyful Star, looking at him with appealing eyes. "You know, it will be much better for her to see another woman by her when she wakes, and then she will recognise Vilcaroya, and that will tell her that she is among friends."

But Djama shook his head and said:

"No, Ruth, not yet. There is something else to be done before that, and I must do it alone. You forget it is not merely a matter of waking. She is not alive yet, but if you will leave me alone for about half an hour I promise you that I will call you and Vilcaroya back before she actually wakes."

"Very well," she said, moving away from the bedside. "I don't want to pry into your mysteries." Then she turned to me, and said, with a faint smile on her lips: "Vilcaroya, come into the dining-room; I have something to say to you."

She went down the room after the Professor and Francis Hartness, and I followed her with beating heart and anxious thoughts, wondering what new lesson it was she was about to teach me.

Djama closed and locked the door after us. She led the way to the dining-room, where there was a light burning. It was empty, for the others, hearing what she had said to me, had gone out into the court-yard. Then she turned and faced me with her back to the light; but in spite of that I could see that her eyes were bright, and her fair face flushed as she said to me in a low voice that trembled a little:

"Vilcaroya, I am going to forget everything that was said in the room yonder, and—and you must forget it, too. It was no time or place for such things to be said, and you and Laurens were not yourselves when you said them. If you do not forget them we cannot be friends any more. You understand me, don't you?"

Gentle and sweetly spoken as the words were, they fell upon my heart like snow upon a fainting flame, yet I felt that, like all her words, they were true and just. I crossed my hands on my breast with one of my old-world gestures, and standing so before her with bowed head, I said:

"The will of Joyful Star is my law. Let what I spoke in my madness be forgotten as you have said. Who am I that I should say such things?—a poor savage that has wandered from his own world into hers where he is a stranger."

"No, not a savage, Vilcaroya. You must never say that word again. How could Golden Star's brother be a savage? How could I—but there, we have said enough for the present. We have other things to think of now."

With that she turned away and sat down in a long low chair, resting her cheek upon her hand, and looking out of one of the windows at the stars, while I went and stood before another to look at the same stars that she was looking at, and so we waited in silence until the door opened, and we heard Djama's voice telling us that the long expected moment of Golden Star's awakening had come at last.

CHAPTER XVIII.

A NEW LIFE AND A NEW HOPE.

As Joyful Star went to the door I stood aside and waited for her to pass me and go out first. As she went by our

eyes met for a moment, and I saw that hers were bright with tears. My heart leapt at the sight, and then fell still again and well-nigh fainting. What had she said to me but a few moments before? How dare I dream that those sweet tears could be for me?

I followed her and Djama into the room, but half-way between the door and the bed I stopped, not daring to go on, held back by some impulse I could not name. I saw her lean over the pillow for a moment of silence that for me was breathless. Then came a soft, sweet sound, and then a little cry—was it hers or Golden Star's? Djama beckoned to me. I went with swift, silent steps to the foot of the little bed, and saw Golden Star's blue eyes looking wonderingly up into Ruth's face, and her red lips smiling at her. The miracle had been completed. She had awakened her with a kiss.

"Come and give her your welcome back to life, Vilcaroya," she whispered, rising and turning her fair face with its wet cheeks and smiling lips towards me. I went and stood over the pillow, and laid my trembling lips on Golden Star's brow, and then I said, in the words that had been the first of my own new life:

"*Cori-Coyllur Nustallipa, ñusta mi!*"

She looked at me, but there was no more recognition in her gaze than in that of a new-born child, nor was there any answering smile upon her lips. Unheeding this for the moment, I went on and said, still speaking very gently and softly in our own tongue:

"Thou art thrice welcome back from the shades of night into the bright presence of our Father the Sun, oh, Golden Star! Dost thou not remember me, Vilcaroya, thy brother, who went into the darkness with thee long ago, and has been permitted to return before thee that he might greet thee and bid thee welcome?"

Her eyes wandered from my face to Joyful Star's, and then she smiled again, but no answering words came from her parted lips. Now, as we looked from one another to her, a great fear came into all our hearts, and Ruth gave it voice.

"Laurens," she whispered, laying her hands upon his arm, "what is the matter? Vilcaroya spoke at once, didn't he? Why doesn't she speak? Oh, surely it can't be that she is—that she has come back to life without memory or—or her reason? What is it?"

I waited for Djama's answer as a man might wait for words that were to tell him whether he was to live or die. He put us both gently away from the bed, and then, laying his hand on Golden Star's brow, he looked long and steadfastly into her eyes. It seemed to me as though Ruth and I could hear each other's hearts beating and counting off the slow seconds until he raised his head again and said in the slow, even tones of the man of science who, for the time, had overcome and banished the lover:

"Memory, perhaps, even probably; but reason, no. These are not the eyes of an imbecile or an idiot, but they are the eyes of a child. It is possible that when she fully recovers we may find her mind a perfect blank—a virgin page on which the story of her new life will have to be written."

"Thank God for that!" she murmured, and I, too, echoed her words in my heart, though I did not know then how much she meant by them.

Then once more she turned and went to Golden Star's pillow, laying her hand upon her brow again, and looking fondly for a moment on the silent and yet eloquent face that was looking up at her. Then she said to her brother:



Resting her cheek upon her hand.

"But is she well now? I mean is her physical life certain? Will she live and grow well and strong again?"

"Yes," he answered. "I have done everything that it is in my power to do. I have fulfilled my promise to His Highness. The rest is, as it was with him, merely a matter of care, and nourishment, and nursing."

"Then," she said, with a swift subtle change coming over her manner, "the care and the nursing must be mine, and you two must say good-bye to her for the present until I have nursed her back to health. Of course, you may see her when necessary as her doctor, but only as her doctor, mind. And you, Vilcaroya, must possess yourself with what



"Now go away, both of you."

patience you can until my part of the work is done as well. Now go away, both of you. I am mistress here for the present. Laurens, you go and get ready the nourishment that you think she should take, and come back in half an hour, and tell me how it is to be taken."

It was easy for us to see that deep yet kindly meaning of her lightly spoken words, for in them she had told us that Golden Star was now once more a living woman. No longer a mummy, or a corpse, or a "subject," as the Professor had called her; no longer an inanimate thing that had neither sex nor claim to human rights; but a sister woman of her own kind whose wants could only be supplied by her. So we obeyed her, and went away, leaving her there to perform the most sacred task save one that a loving woman could perform.

Djama went to prepare the food that Golden Star would soon need, and I went in search of the Professor and Francis Hartness, and told them all that had happened, and then, when the Professor had gone to bed to finish his broken night's rest, I and he who was my rival in love and who was to be my brother in arms went out from the courtyard into the *patio* which lay in front of the house, sloping down towards the entrance of the little valley in which the hacienda lay, and there, walking to and fro side by side, we talked long and earnestly of many things upon the doing of which my heart was set, and which might now be freely entered upon, seeing that the first object of our journey was already achieved.

Our talk, as you may well believe, was of war and not of love, though it would be hard to say which of the two at that hour most filled our secret thoughts; but, as I have told you, this English soldier was a true man and I trusted him, knowing well that though, when the imperial *Llauto* once more encircled my brows, I might find courage to

seek openly the love of her into whose eyes I had already seen him look with love, yet no falsehood or hatred could ever come between us. So I told him freely of the treasures that I had only to take from their hiding-places to make them mine, and spoke of the use that I would make of them, and took his advice as to the best method of that use.

This he was well able to give me, for I soon found that since he had resolved to throw in his lot with us he had applied himself diligently to the task of studying the work that was to be ours, and seeking the best and readiest means of doing it. In Lima and Arequipa he had bought books and papers from which he had learned, as far as could be learned, the resources and power of the government of Peru, the number of its soldiers and their stations, the names and characters of the men who made the government and of those who were opposed to them, seeking, as he told me, was now ever the case in the countries of South America, to overturn the government and to take for themselves the honours and the profits of rule.

He told me—which events soon proved to be the truth—that not many months would pass by before civil war once more broke out. The President and the ministers, who were the tools of his tyranny, had oppressed the people with grievous burdens till they could endure them no longer, and already people in the towns of the interior were refusing to pay taxes, and were arming themselves in secret and meeting in bands among the mountains to practice themselves with their weapons, and make ready for the war which was so soon to come.

All this, as he soon showed me, was happening as though the Fates which ruled the world had especially prepared it for my coming. The people had no leader, save a man that had been himself a tyrant before, and none trusted him, but looked to him only to serve their own ends. Those who had the power were hated, and those who sought to seize it were distrusted. But better than all was the utter and, as far as all men, save ourselves, could see, the hopeless poverty of the country. Long years of plundering had emptied the treasury. Commerce was leaving the shores, and industries were languishing throughout the land. No man trusted his neighbour, for nearly all were in debt, and none could get paid, and my own people, the hewers of wood and drawers of water, the slaves of the children of the Spaniards and the sport of their blind and brutal jesting, had borne their heavy burdens till their backs were sore, sore as their patient hearts were, and they would bear them no longer.

From the country which is called Ecuador, and which in my other-life had been Quito, the kingdom of Atahualpa, to the southern confines of Bolivia, which had once been part of the Land of the Four Regions, the dominions of my own father, all were ready to throw down their long-borne burdens and turn and rend their oppressors and those whose fathers had robbed them of the land that had once been theirs.

I well remember the very words in which Francis Hartness told me all this at much greater length than I have set it down here, and this is what he said when, as the stars were paling in the sky above us and the Eastern mountains were beginning to stand out sharply against the growing light of the coming dawn, our long talk drew to its close.

"In short, Vilcaroya, if I were given to that sort of thing I could believe that the very Fates themselves had conspired to prepare the way for you. You have come back to the world and to your own country at the very moment that these miserable wretches are getting ready to tear each other to pieces. The government is as hopeless as it is impossible, and the popular party, as they call themselves, have neither a leader that they can trust nor money to buy weapons and pay their soldiers with. The treasury is empty, for, so to speak, almost the last dollar has been stolen. The native troops have had no regular pay for months, and I believe they would desert to a regiment if they once believed that you are what you are

and that you possess, as you do, the means of paying them well and honestly for their help.

"And, after all, I don't know that even I, as a soldier, could call it desertion under such circumstances. You are of their own blood, the son of one of their ancient kings. These people, these Peruvians, are only mongrel descendants of those who have plundered and oppressed them for centuries. They owe them no allegiance that is worth the name; but you they would hail, not only as their lawful king, but almost as a god—as, indeed, they could well be pardoned for doing, seeing what a marvellous fate yours has been.

"The only thing to do at present, and the only thing in which I see any difficulty, is to get into communication with them in such a way that they shall come to know you without the authorities knowing anything about you or your treasures. If that could be done, I think all the rest would be easy, and then I believe that the moment you raised the flag of the old Incas they would flock to it in thousands, and after that it would only be a matter of military management and leadership."

"And if I will charge myself with that, my friend," I said, as he paused for a moment; "if I will promise you that before six more suns have risen and set, the news of my coming shall be spread far and wide through the land, and yet in such a manner that none but the faithful, the Children of the Blood themselves, shall know anything that could work us harm, will you give me the help of your skill and your knowledge of the arts of this new warfare which is so strange to me? Will you lead my armies to battle and to victory against the oppressors of my people? Will you help me to free this land of my father's from the yoke of its tyrants, and be the war-chieftain of my people, and stand by my throne in the days when the rainbow banner shall once more float over the battlements of the Sacahuaman and the City of the Sun? If you will you shall have riches and power and all that the heart of man can desire."

"Not all I am afraid, Vilcaroya," he said, interrupting

me with a laugh that had but little mirth in it. "Not all, but that would not be in your hands to give. Never mind it is the fortune of war, or, perhaps, I should rather say of love. But for the rest, yes. I believe your cause is a just and righteous one, and what I can do to help it I will. Henceforth we are brothers in arms, even though we may perhaps be rivals in love. There, you have my hand upon it, and with it the word of an Englishman who never broke his word yet to man or woman."

How shall I tell you of the wild exultation with which those brave, honest-spoken words of his filled me? He, the man whom I had feared most, even as I had learned to love him most, was the first to bid me hope—and hope I did now, in spite of all things. So, saying nothing, for my heart was too full for speech, I put my hand in his, and there, as the dawn brightened over the Eastern mountains, we clasped hands in silence and sealed our compact, and when the sun rose swiftly over the now glittering mountain peaks, I let go his hand and bowed myself before it, greeting it as the bringer of a new day, which was to end the long night that had fallen over my land and my people, when the light of my last life was quenched in the darkness of my death-sleep.



"You have my hand upon it."

(To be continued.)

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Pearson's Magazine.

It will be beautifully illustrated. It will be Published Monthly. It will cost Sixpence. The first number will appear on

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We owe no apology for invading a field apparently, perhaps, adequately occupied. We can truthfully say that **Pearson's Magazine** will resemble no other. Holding an opinion, whether rightly or wrongly, that the whole conception and conduct of the British Magazine as it exists to-day is far behind what it should be, we are endeavouring to issue an ideal one. The whole thing will be so original, will embody so many new ideas, and will give so much for so little, that we confidently expect to see **Pearson's Magazine** take the first rank in popularity and prestige from the very commencement. It will be the finest magazine the world has ever seen at the price. In its artistic and literary merits it will stand alone.

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SOMETHING TO SHOUT ABOUT.

THE

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JUST LOOK AT THE ATTRACTIONS IT WILL CONTAIN.

Three Magnificent Coloured Plates, each of which is, to use an Irishism, better than the other.

Splendid and seasonable stories by the following well-known authors: F. Frankfort-Moore, George Griffith, W. L. Alden, Allen Upward, G. B. Burgin, William Le Queux, and others.

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THIS IS NOT ALL.

Every purchaser will have a chance of gaining £50. For particulars of how to acquire this comfortable little sum we must ask you to look in the Xmas No. itself.

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Be sure and place your order with a newsagent at once. There can be no reprint.

Little Miss Justice.

"YES," I said, "it's the other way about with women. The bigger a man is the bigger whipping he can give you. But it's the little women that pick a man up and stand him on his silly head, like the groom in the 'Arabian Nights.' And by that same token"—here I stirred up Joel with a heavy fire-stick, and roused him to a consciousness of my aphoristic wisdom—"the little women always lose their heads more completely over big men."

"H'm," said Joel, rolling over into perilous proximity to the fire, "I knew a little woman once——"

"That time! O times!" I quoted; "go on with the yarn."

"Shan't," said Joel tersely.

"Very well; don't," I retorted.

For a while we lay and listened to the crackling of the huge wood fire and the soft pad, pad in the darkness, about a pistol shot away.

"Plain little woman, too," said Joel, after a while, in his usual spirit of contrariety, "but pluck enough for three of those cowardly beasts out there."

Pad, pad, went the velvety footsteps out in the darkness.

"Aye," went on Joel, "I was going with a bullock-waggon to Natal. The oxen died, and the rascally Kaffirs cut sticks. I didn't know how to manage things then, and I got a bitter little lesson. Had to leave the waggon and plunder and make tracks for some place to get more men and oxen, and these people gave me a lift; three whites in a waggon and a school of Kaffirs; two women and a man; his wife and her sister; sister the little one. I rode down on them late one evening and explained matters. The man—forget his name—was going to the very place I wanted. So I threw in my lot with theirs for a long trek.

"On the first night I discovered that the man was a brute, and thrashed his wife—a pale, washed-out woman—brutally. Never in my sight, though; he'd have got a pounding for himself. Wife used to sit and cry in the waggon. At nights and stopping places he drank. Sister was a splendid horsewoman; he never touched her. Once he offered to, but she pulled out a revolver and cocked it. 'Pshaw,' he said, and backed down. She'd have perforated him if he hadn't.

"She and I used to ride together. Beautiful riding on that veldt, springy and light. And she could go. Used to talk, too. Never heard anyone else talk like she did.

"Little woman with blue eyes, brown hair, and freckles; but as prettily made as you need wish to see. A little long in the arms, perhaps, but a beautiful hand on a rein. Rode a hard-mouthed brute called Timon—black, and with the tricks of a fiend. Bit like a savage puppy. Her bridle-straps were all double thickness, and she rode him with a curb. I was powerful sorry to leave her when we reached Hapsburgh. Wouldn't have done, neither, if she'd given me a hint to stay. We outspanned a mile from Hapsburgh, and I calculated to ride in in the morning.

"Good-bye," I said, in a babyfied fashion.

"Good-bye, Mr. Black," she said, and gave me a hand in her grave way. I could have wrung it off in my pain.

"I rode off early next morning, and was half a mile on my way when I heard the sound of flying hoofs. I turned. It was Timon and she. I stopped.

"Mr. Black," she cried, and I could scarcely hear what she said, the words were so broken with either grief or passion.

"You're a man," she gasped out, 'for the sake of your name come back and flog him.'

"Who?" I said.

"Him," she gasped out again, 'he has beaten her within an inch of her life in one of his fits. If you are a man come back and flog him, or I shall shoot him dead.'

"I turned to the strangest errand ever mortal entered on. She hurled her black brute at every gully and water-hole that came in our way, and rode over smooth ground like one possessed. My swift little mare had her work cut out in keeping up with her. She used no whip to Timon, but the knuckles of her brown hand were snow-white with the grip of her fingers on the loose curb rein. At last we rode up to the waggon with the cattle clustered round it. I stopped.

"Jack," I said (her name was Joanna, but they called her Jack), 'I won't do this for nothing.'

"Her face fell.

"I want pay," I said, 'I want a kiss and then I will flog the brute if you like.'

"She hesitated, and then put up her lips. Her face was wet with the perspiration of our headstrong ride, and hot with anger, but I laid her cheek to mine, and kissed the stern mouth beneath my lifted hat.

"Go," she said, 'go.'

"I went to the waggon. He was glowering in a corner. His wife lay deadly pale on the rough pallet bed, a great red weal across her face.

"Come out," I shouted, in my fierce anger, which was her anger. He struck at me with the stock-whip he held in his hand.

"I dragged him out and twisted the whip from his grasp. Then I lashed him till the blood poured like rain. You know what a stock-whip of hippopotamus hide is, and what it can do. I struck fiercely and tirelessly at his writhing, struggling body, and she sat looking on from her great black horse like a shape of stone.

"At last I flung him down and went across to her.

"He pulled a revolver from somewhere and fired at me. The bullet struck her on the temple."

Joel's voice failed.

Pad, pad, went the soft feet in the darkness.

"What did you do?" I asked involuntarily.

"Left him out on the veldt without a fire. In the morning there were a few bones. Every time I see a pair of eyes like that in the dark"—Joel pointed to two gleaming orbs before him—"I feel as if they were his, and I do this——"

Joel took up his rifle and levelled it.

Spaang!

There was a hideous yell, and the eyes went out.

Joel rolled over again, and in the quiet of the night, when I roused myself to pile more wood on the fire, I heard him say "Jack," and then, "Come out, you brute."

GEO. KNIGHT.

❖ An - Unfortunate - Attachment. ❖

HE little seaside village of Caveton may have a future before it or not; it certainly has not as yet shown any signs of development; the few houses that together formed the small fishing and, we fear it must be said, smuggling hamlet in what now seems to be a bygone age, still remain, and have only been added to from time to time by a mixture between a villa and a cottage, and probably not a score of these within the memory of the oldest inhabitant.

In fact, the little place remains what it always has been—out of the beaten track; and the few visitors who find their way to it summer after summer are either artists or enthusiastic sea-fishermen.

It was, therefore, matter for wonder amongst the quiet village folk what could have induced the grand lady—for she was a grand lady, being none other than the Lady Eva Bateman—to come and settle down for a whole month, and at the conclusion of that period, which she announced when she arrived first was to be the duration of her visit, to show no signs of moving from the pretty rooms in the small cottage, where she and an elderly lady, her aunt, had established themselves.

She did not go in for painting, but used to roam about the place, a big black retriever her sole companion.

There was a pensive look about her face, which, coupled with the fact that on the third finger of her left hand she wore a wedding-ring, had given rise to the idea that she had been married, but to whom or when nobody troubled to inquire.

And so the time went on, the village folk had become accustomed to her presence; the children in the street curtsied to her when she passed by, and the rough fisher folk removed their short clay pipes and touched their hats to her.

She was not absolutely without society, or rather companionship. The beach around Caveton, is, as its name implies, prolific in caves, and at low tide these are easily accessible, but at high water their existence is not discernible, a fact of which the bold smugglers in the early forties were well aware.

One day in the course of her explorations of one of these caverns Lady Bateman found, when it was too late, that the tide had risen and effectually cut off her retreat. Fortunately for her, her dangerous predicament had been observed by one of the two or three artists just then staying in the place, Archie Wallace, and, being an active young fellow, he had lost no time in descending the cliff—it was not very precipitous—and removed the lady to a ledge of rock out of the reach of high water, remaining with her until the tide receded, when it was possible to return the way she had come.

Now, the fact of being left alone for several hours in a position of more or less imminent danger, with a strikingly handsome young man who has just, at the risk of his own life, saved her own, cannot fail to make its influence felt on a woman, be she ever so reserved, and the natural consequence of the adventure was that Archie Wallace, having escorted his fair charge to the door of her cottage, was by her asked in; formally introduced

to the aunt, and in a very short time found himself on terms of intimacy with the two ladies.

This had been upwards of three weeks ago, and the important sea piece on which the young artist had staked his reputation had not made much progress in the interval.

At the time this story commences he was sitting idly on the beach, looking dreamily at the sea before him, and thinking, as he always was, of her.

And she? Was she reciprocating his thoughts, or what?

We shall not be accused of playing the part of Peeping Tom, perhaps, if we venture to glance inside the cottage where she resides. Her aunt, good soul, has fallen placidly asleep. Rollo, the retriever, is lying at his mistress' feet, and she is in the act of writing a long letter to one of her bosom friends; an extract from it will serve our purpose:

"You can't imagine what he is like, so it is no use my attempting to describe him to you. . . . Know, then, that he is different in every respect to the men you and I are accustomed to meet; that he is a gentleman you will have gathered from my previous letters, but he is more than that. He is the very soul and embodiment of all that is honourable and true. He might in the Middle Ages have been a man amongst men, even in those days when chivalry to women was a more common attribute of man's character than it is now; and, do you know, he reveres me, and, in fact, looks upon me as something almost too good to live.

"Think of that, my dear. . . . And yet he has never said a word that could be construed into anything—you know what I mean. . . . Is it not refreshing in this nineteenth century to find such a man? and, having found, can you wonder at my staying on here?"

"I came away wanting an entire change, a new sensation in life, and it cannot be said I have failed to succeed in discovering it; and yet at times I am half sorry.

"Heigh ho! what's the use of moralising. I may be in a fool's paradise, but I will enjoy it while I can, and now, dear—" the sentence remained unfinished, for at that moment she recognised a well-known footstep on the stairs, and in another instant the man she had been describing, with a "may I come in?" and not waiting for an answer, had entered the room.

He was undeniably handsome as he stood there, boating cap in hand, as the glint of the fast setting sun shone upon his curly hair—a mere boy he looked, although reference to the old family Bible would have revealed the fact that he was in his twenty-fourth year.

"What a shame to stop in such an evening as this. Won't you come down to the beach and see the sun set? It is going to be a glorious evening, and I shan't have an opportunity of seeing many more of them."

"Are you going away, then?"

"Yes; I have, exceeded the limit of holiday I had allowed myself, by a good bit, even now, but it has been so pleasant here. I have been loth to tear myself away," he added in a serious tone. "But you will come, won't you?"

"Yes, I'll come," and, putting her hat on, she led the

way, Rollo, as usual, testifying his pleasure at going out; and the old lady dozed pleasantly on.

It was, as he had said, a magnificent sunset, well worth coming out to see; and, possibly, it was the grandeur of the scene that led both of them to keep a silence for a while, which she was the first to break.

"How lovely it all is! Let us take the boat and go for a row."

Had she said let us take a balloon, he would have been only too willing to honour her, and with a strong push of his lusty arms, he soon had the boat—her boat he had come to call it—afloat, and having seen that she was comfortably seated in the stern, was quickly pulling out towards the golden West.

If it had been pleasant on the beach, it was doubly so on the water, and as the oars splashed in the sea, and the light glanced on the ripples they made on the oily surface, it was a scene to arouse the artistic sympathies of the rower; and, he looked, as, indeed, he was, supremely happy.

Presently he rested on his oars, and looked at his companion with unmistakable adoration expressed in his glance.

She felt its influence and shivered unconsciously.

"Why do you look at me like that?" she asked petulantly.

"Because I can't help it," he replied simply. "You ought to be an angel."

The remark was said in all honesty, there was an unmistakable ring of truth about it, but it did not please her; on the contrary she was annoyed.

"My dear boy, angels only exist in the imagination. At any rate, no woman is an angel or a saint either; I know I am not."

"I should be sorry to think otherwise."

"Oh, Archie, you are too good for this world. You have formed an altogether erroneous impression of me, but in time you will have come to see things in quite a different light—forgotten all about me, in fact."

"I can never do that."

"Oh, yes you will, when some new fancy seizes you. We have been excellent friends, haven't we? Well, why not let us remain so—until—until—you tire of me?"

For a moment the man looked at her earnestly, and then, letting his oars drop from his hands, he leant towards her, and before she knew what he was doing, had seized one of her hands in his, and looking at her in a way that made her wince, it was so passionately intreating, said in a choking voice: "Eva, I can never tire of you, for I love you—love you better than life itself—it's no use telling me that no women are angels when I know one that is. I have never dared to say this to you before, but when you looked like you did just now I couldn't help it."

"Oh, you foolish boy," murmured her ladyship as if to herself. "Do you know the greatest kindness I could do would be to destroy your faith in human nature once and for ever?"

"You can destroy my faith in every human being save one, and I should not mind; but you will always be the same to me, a woman beyond compare. I did not think I could ever have dared to speak to you as I have done, but it is out at last, and oh! my darling"—with a look of longing affection—"have you nothing to say to me? No word of hope—of—love? Things couldn't go on for ever as they have done, and I want you to decide when we shall end our old life and begin the new. I want you to—"

"Stop," she said. "Don't ask me—don't ask me to be your wife."

"And why? You cannot fail to have seen my affection for you. I love you, Eva, and—"

She broke into a short laugh. "Oh, you silly boy, why couldn't you take things, take—things—sensibly?"

"I—I don't know what you mean," he said blankly.

"Poor boy—why will you take life so seriously? Why couldn't you have let things be? We have been very happy—you and I—why not have let it remain so?"

"I don't think I quite understand. I am not much used to woman's ways. Do you—do you mean—there is some reason why you can't marry me?"

"There is—the best of all reasons. I am married already."

"You have been, you mean—your husband is dead."

A burning flush overspread her face. "No. He is alive."

The water souged against the bows of the boat; the tide had turned; both sat as if spell-bound. "Will he never speak?" she said to herself. At last his mouth framed the one word:

"Alive!"

There was something awful in the expression of his voice; it was that of an old man.

"Alive," he repeated, his voice by degrees assuming a more natural tone, "and you never told me."

"You never asked me," with an attempt at a smile.

"I believed in you," was his simple rejoinder.

She looked at him, and her whole heart went out to him. "Oh, Archie, I never thought it would come to this; believe me I didn't. I was so miserable. I wanted a change from the dreamy, dreary life I am compelled to lead, and you came in my way, and you were different to all other men I have ever met. It was good to be with you, and you never seemed to be in earnest, and—"

He turned the boat's head sharply round, and pulled as if his life depended upon his exertion. His face was hard set and resolute, and as she watched him she felt a keen pang of remorse.

"If you had not taken things so seriously, if you could only have made love to me as other men have done."

"I couldn't," he said, in a choking voice, "for I loved you. God help me."

With a harsh, grating sound the boat touched the beach; he held her head up by the painter, but made no sign to assist his companion to step out, and to steady herself she placed her hand on his arm.

With a rough gesture he shook it off.

Then she fairly broke down. "Archie, won't you say you forgive me?"

"I have nothing to forgive."

"Won't you say good-bye, then?"

"Good-bye. You have a husband, go to him; you belong to him; and he to you."

"You are cruel. Have I not told you how miserable my life is? Will you make it a little more bearable by being my friend?"

"Friend! do you know what you say—you who have robbed me of everything that makes life worth living? Until I knew you I believed that women were good, that they were sent into the world to be a comfort to us men who are willing to work for them, die for them, if need be—but friends! No, the dream is passed, and by dint of hard work I may in time be able to forget that it ever existed;" and he strode away over the rocks, and she was left there standing alone.

"Why would he take life so seriously? After all, we might have been the best of friends."



THE LOVE of A TONTO MAIDEN.

THE scarlet sumac is the colour of a Tonto maiden's headband, and the red willows in White River Cañon are the colour of a Tonto maiden's cheek.

She sat embowered in sumac and red willows. The grey rocks of one side of the cañon rose behind her. In front, ten feet away, the foaming White River sang its unending song. She sat motionless, her feet crossed beneath her, her elbows resting on her knees, and her face supported by her hands. How many hours she had sat thus only the Great Spirit knew.

How many nights had fallen upon the gloomy cañon, how many suns had filled it with glory, how many days she had been without food—although there was meat within reach of her hand—how long she had been without even a draught of water—although the river surged so near—she neither knew nor cared. She felt no fatigue, although she had walked without stopping for even a moment's rest from the Tonto basin to this cañon that dropped from the back line of the quarters at Fort Apache.

It was here that he said he would meet her if ever she wished to see him. She was to come to this cañon, and just as the echoes of the sunset gun died away, she was to utter the cry of the grey coyote thrice, and he would come to her.

She firmly believed him. It did not seem strange to her that a handsome young white man, who wore yellow straps on his shoulders, and commanded a troop of cavalry (when his captain and first lieutenant were on detached service), should love a little Tonto maiden.

The young men of the village round her father's were each and all of them mad for love of her. They called her "Mountain Flower," and "Spring Dew," and "Rock Rose." They killed bears to provide her with

coveted claws for her necklaces, and each and all of them hoped some day to kill a white man or two, in order that they might shine with more glory in her eyes. And all this adoration had made her a spoiled little Tonto maiden, who had learned the coquette's delight in breaking hearts, and the art of keeping her own very safe from injury.

But one day came a laughing, blue-eyed, white soldier with his rollicking troop of cavalry, to camp during a hot month of the summer, close by their own village. And when the white man had looked at her and smiled she had taken her heart at once from its safe hiding place, and given it to him just as though she had been guarding it all her life for his coming. And he understood, for the white soldiers, especially the young men, are very keen in affairs of love.

For a month she was the happiest young woman in the world. Her old father shook his head and warned her against everything white. She laughed at him. The young men frowned and walked stealthily about, muttering threats. She laughed at them.

The white man, she told them, could kill them all.

She felt very secure as well as happy, for was she not the most beautiful woman that had ever been seen of living man? She had never seen a white woman, and her ideas of them were rather contemptuous. They were as lilies, and could be destroyed by the pressure



of two fingers. Besides, if there were any possible white rival, she and the other would fight with knives and clubs, and she would kill her, proudly, before the very eyes of the white man himself.

The white man had never told her that he would take her to wife, but she was very sure that it was merely a question of a few moons ere he would buy her from her father and take her to his own wickiup, somewhere where there was a large village of the white soldiers. Indeed, he never seemed serious in anything, but laughed a great deal, which was very different from the manner of the surly young men of her own race. Sometimes he held her hand for a little while, and stroked her glossy black hair; but he never went further in his love-making until one day when he and his soldiers suddenly broke camp and moved away.

On that day he took her for a short jaunt, and told her where he was going, and how she could find the place. And he told her about the cañon and the great gun that was fired at sunset, and bade her, if she wanted him, to give the coyote call in the cañon. She did not know that he shrewdly suspected she would be persecuted after his departure for her too evident preference for him.

And then he put his arm round her, and touched his lips very lightly to her cheek—a caress that seemed very odd and unusual to her, but at the same time very delightful. He told her that he would come back some day—a statement which he made quite unthinkingly, but which gave her great hope and joy. And then he rode away, very bravely, at the head of his band of white braves.

The white man was not mistaken as to the treatment she would receive after he had gone. Her father beat her and scolded her. Her mother made her do the work of four women, and gave her only leavings from each meal to eat. The young men who once worshipped her now taunted her and boasted how they would have killed her white man if her love had been worth it.

The young girls, in fact all the women, laughed at her, and it almost seemed as though her pony hung his head in shame, although he had formerly been the wildest and proudest in the drove. But he was no longer her pony now, for her father had taken him away and given him to a younger sister.

But Kanahee bore it all very bravely. Had not the white man promised to come back? And when he did come back he would buy her far more ponies and blankets than her father could get for all his other daughters put together. Then it would be her turn to taunt the young men and laugh at the young girls.

She counted the days through the first moon, and he did not come. She counted the days through the second, and it was the same. At the end of the third moon her heart was heavy with doubt and fear. She no

longer counted the days, but worked on and suffered silently.

Six moons had passed, and she could endure it no longer. One night, when the village was asleep, she took her knife and enough food to last her for a few days, and started out on the trail in the direction the white man had indicated. Three days and nights she walked, and on the morning of the fourth she sank down on one side of White River Cañon, and saw the smoke rise from the barracks of the white soldiers on the other.

Her heart leapt with joy. She clambered down the steep trail to the river, and drank, and ate. Then she hid in the red willows and waited till sunset. A trail ran by the side of the river on this bank, and the rocks rose abruptly from the mad waters on the other. So she knew that when he came it would be by this trail.

At sunset she heard the great gun, and it would have frightened her had not her mind been so intent on the cry of the coyote. Three times she uttered that peculiar wail, and three times she heard the echoes run up and down the cañon until it seemed as though a whole pack were yelping round her. She could hear the answering bark of dogs, and knew that the sound must have been carried to his ears. Then she crept into a bunch of red willows and waited.

He came. But he did not come at her call. He did not come for her, and he did not come alone. Walking behind him on the trail was a pale young girl in a snow-white dress. She was so beautiful that Kanahee sank on her knees and dared not breathe. She would have thought it a spirit from the land of the dead had she not heard her laugh in a low, rippling way that sounded like the song of a bird.

Kanahee felt a pain at her heart as though she had been struck by an arrow. Who was this wonderful white girl, with hair like a sunrise and clothes like the flying clouds? What was she to him? Did the white man think her more beautiful than Kanahee? Her heart sank when she asked herself this question, for she knew that she was ugly and homely compared to this vision in white.

But she would not give up. She would not believe that he had a false heart until she was sure. She would wait. And meanwhile she would try the snake. It is not a pretty superstition, this of the snake, nor one that is likely to be adopted by Kanahee's more civilised sisters. But a Tonto maiden firmly believes that she can read in the eyes of a rattlesnake her fate in love—provided she captures the snake alive herself.

Kanahee waited until morning, and when the first rattlesnake, warmed by the early rays of the sun, thrust its head out of a hole in the rocks near by, she deftly slipped over it a noose that she had made in a strip



The white man held out his arms.



She clambered down the steep trail.

of buckskin, and held it prisoner. Then she again sought her hiding-place of sumac and red willow.

Either end of the strip of buckskin she tied to a willow about six inches from the ground, thus securing her snake with his head erect and his body writhing on the ground. Then she sat down before him, and looked into his fiery eyes. The eyes blazed, the fangs darted in and out, and the body writhed, but the eyes told her nothing of love.

For hours she sat motionless. For hours she rocked herself to and fro and moaned. Night came and day came. Night came again and day again, and still she watched patiently before the maddened snake. But the white man did not come again, and the snake's eyes told her nothing of love.

It was evening of the third day when she heard a footfall. She peered through the bushes and saw him again. Again the pale girl in the white dress was walking daintily behind him. They stopped in the trail directly in front of her. The tall white man turned and held out his arms. The girl walked up to him with a beautiful smile, and laid her head gently on his shoulder. He folded his arms about her and kissed her on the cheek, just as he had kissed Kanahee.

He smiled and whispered in her ear. And then he said playfully two words, and the pale girl laughed. The two words were "sisagi," and "manana."

Kanahee knew what both words meant. "Sisagi" was the Indian word for "sweetheart" or "darling," "manana" the Mexican word, and by usage also the Indian word for "to-morrow."

The lovers moved slowly away. Kanahee waited until they were out of sight, and then she leant slowly towards her rattlesnake. She presented her cheek to it, and the snake struck furiously at the very spot where the white man had kissed her. It buried its fangs with its utmost strength, but Kanahee merely smiled. She loosened the strip of buckskin from the willows, and the snake hurriedly glided away, carrying the strip with it. Then Kanahee lay down on the grass and burst into tears.

No human being ever saw Kanahee after she left her father's wickiup. Even her body was never found. For the scarlet sumac is the colour of a Tonto maiden's head-band and the red willows in White River Cañon are the colour of a Tonto maiden's cheek. And even the vultures disdain the prey of the rattlesnake.

RICHARD SIBERT.

A * SHORT * WOOING.

HELENA V—was the eldest daughter of a Polish nobleman. Her mother had died in giving birth to a second daughter when Helena was scarcely three years old, and her father, disappointed at having no son to inherit his estates, conceived the strange notion of bringing up his eldest daughter as a boy.

Accordingly, she was dressed in boy's garments, her name was changed to Alexander, and she was taught riding, fencing, and all other manly exercises.

Helena grew up tall and strong, a bold rider and swimmer, and a most dexterous fencer and gymnast. Moreover, she astonished her tutor by her marvellous progress in all her studies.

In spite of her exclusively masculine education, however, she preserved a sweetness and gentleness of demeanour that was eminently feminine, added to which, she was gifted with rare beauty, which was enhanced by her magnificent physique and radiant health.

As womanhood advanced, the feminine part of her nature developed more and more. She became more devoted to study and reflection, and less inclined to take part in her father's pursuits, in which she had hitherto been his constant companion.

The Count began to realise that his scheme was unnatural and impossible, and resolved to abandon it. He sent for his daughter, informed her of his decision, and desired her to lay aside her masculine attire, and resume her baptismal name of Helena. She now devoted herself entirely to feminine occupations and the education of her little sister; but scarcely a year afterwards the cholera broke out in the village near which they lived, and the Count and his youngest daughter were among the earliest victims. Helena went to live with her uncle and aunt, who came to her directly they heard of the great affliction and sorrow which had befallen her.

Very shortly after she went to live with them the revolution of 1861 broke out, and Count Pitowsky joined the insurgents, leaving his wife and niece in the lonely house almost unprotected, for he took most of his servants and tenants with him.

After his departure the two women waited day by day in painful suspense for news of him; but none came. A rumour reached them once that there had been an encounter, but no particulars were given, and the news only increased their anxiety.

Late one night, just as they were retiring to rest, they heard the clatter of a horse's hoofs in the stone courtyard. Helena, who was in her aunt's room, ran downstairs and met one of the servants, who told her that a soldier wished to speak to her immediately. She went into the kitchen, and a tall man sitting near the table rose up and came unsteadily forward to meet her.

"I am carrying a message to the general of the Polish Army," he said hurriedly. "The Russians are going to surprise them to-morrow morning. I have to ride to K—, sixty miles beyond the village below here, and my horse has just dropped dead at your door. Can you give me another horse? I must get to K— before morning."

He stopped short, reeled, and, before Helen could reach him, fell heavily in a dead faint on the stone floor.

Helena called for assistance, and vainly tried for nearly an hour to restore the unconscious man. The conviction forced itself upon her that he would not be able to reach his destination that night, and the result would be a terrible disaster to the Polish Army. Must her brave countrymen—her uncle, too, and his followers—perish for lack of a few words of warning? A thousand times no! The brave girl soon made up her

mind. She went to her aunt and told her how matters stood.

"Alas, alas!" cried the Countess, wringing her hands. "What is to be done?"

"Listen!" said Helena. "I will go. I will saddle Peter and start at once. The road is straight, and by morning I shall have reached K—, and saved the army and my dear uncle."

For a while the Countess strenuously refused to let her niece depart at dead of night, alone and unattended, upon such a dangerous mission, but at length she yielded to Helena's urgent intreaties and passionate arguments, and with many tears gave an unwilling consent.

The young girl went to her room, and choosing out some of the male attire her father used to make her wear, hastily dressed herself in it, and covered her luxuriant black hair with a close-fitting cap. Then she loaded a couple of pistols, and, putting some spare ammunition into her pockets, went downstairs. The three women servants looked up terrified and amazed as she entered the kitchen.

"It is I," said Helena quietly, and bending over the still unconscious messenger, she drew from his breast the precious missive addressed to the Polish General. Then, after a brief explanation, received by the astonished servants in dead silence, she went to the stable, and saddled the one horse her uncle left behind.

"Thou hast a long journey to-night, Peter," she said, as she buckled his rein and patted his neck. The horse sniffed the air, and trembled. He scented the dead body of the messenger's unfortunate steed, which lay in the courtyard. Helena led him past it and through the gates into the road. Then she sprang into the saddle, and galloped away into the darkness. For about an hour Peter went like the wind. Then he slackened down into a steadier pace. They had to pass through a thick forest, and Helena hoped that by the time this was reached the moon would be up, and give sufficient light for her to see the path.

She entered the forest about half-past one, and rode for nearly an hour in dense gloom. Then, at last, the moon shone faintly between the trees, and she breathed more freely. Suddenly Peter snorted and plunged, nearly throwing his rider as he dashed forward at a gallop. Helena turned in her saddle, and saw behind her the grey shadowy forms of two huge wolves. With a thrill the thought flashed across her that unless she could kill them or frighten them away they might perhaps bring the whole pack down on her.

But there was also another consideration. There might be spies or Russian outposts in the forest, and if reports of a pistol rang through the night, she might be pursued by men instead of wolves. In either case the danger was imminent. She looked back again. One of the beasts, swifter than its companion, was already at her horse's heels. Suddenly he made a dart forward, and snapped at Helena's boot. The next instant she had drawn her pistol and shot him dead. The report of the weapon reverberated again and again, and awoke a thousand slumbering echoes. The surviving wolf threw itself upon the body of its companion, and began ravenously devouring it, while horse and rider sped away.

Dawn broke, and Peter began to show signs of fatigue.

Helena would have fain spared him, but she dared not slacken speed until the goal was reached. At last a row of white tents appeared upon the horizon.

"Courage, Peter," said his mistress; "our journey is nearly ended."

About a mile further on Helena suddenly perceived a horseman riding towards her.

She pulled up, and hesitated whether to go on or to draw into the shade of a grove of trees and allow him to pass by. As he drew nearer, she saw to her horror that he was a Russian officer.

There was nothing for it, however, but to ride on. As she came up to him, she recognised a young man whom she used frequently to meet at her father's house before the Insurrection broke out, and who had on more than one occasion intimated his love for her, and his hope that he might some day be permitted to pay his addresses to her. She attempted to ride past him, but he stopped her.

"What is your business here, young man?"

"Ivan Kharkoff, have you forgotten me?" said Helena.

He started. "I know your voice, but——"

"I am Helena——"

"Helena! But why are you here and in male attire? Where are you going? How did you get past the Russian outposts?"

"I rode all night through the forest."

Kharkoff uttered an exclamation of dismay.

"You must return with me," he said. "My orders are to let no one pass."

Helena burst into tears. "Oh, let me go," she intreated. "My uncle is dying, and I am going to nurse him."

"You are not telling me the truth," said Ivan sternly. "I cannot let you pass."

Then Helena, seeing that all was lost, told him everything. With passionate eloquence she pleaded her cause; the fact that her uncle and aunt were her only relatives, and that she was dependent upon them.

"If you will not let me warn my uncle of his danger," she cried, "to-night will see his wife a widow and both of us homeless, friendless, and ruined."

"No," rejoined Ivan passionately, "never while I am alive, Helena, my love! Come with me, and I will guard you with my life and fill the place of all that you have lost."

"How can I wed my uncle's murderer?" said Helena.

"Oh, Ivan, Ivan, let me go!"

"My honour is at stake," he replied.

"Our encounter is a mere accident. Who will know of it? Your men are in some other direction, and you have ridden out here to reconnoitre on your own responsibility. Go back and forget that you have seen me. Ah, Ivan, if you ever loved me, let me go."

Her beauty, her tears, and intreaties at last prevailed with the man who loved her.

"Well, be it so," he said. "Your horse is weary. Take mine," and he dismounted.

Helena threw herself at his feet, and covered his hands with kisses. He raised her, and pressed her tenderly to his breast.

"Tell me that you loved me—that you love me still," he murmured.

"I love you," replied Helena. "I shall love you till I die."

Then she mounted the Russian's horse, and rode away towards the distant camp.

Ivan watched her till her figure was but a speck upon the horizon. Then he turned the muzzle of his pistol against his breast and shot himself through the heart.

AMY MONTAGUE.

LEGENDS OF WOLFVILLE.

BY "DAN QUINN."

Wolfville is a Cattleman's Settlement in Arizona, and the Characters in these Legends are Cowboys.

I.—The Jealousy of Mrs. Tutt.

"BEIN' single mys'f that away," observed the old cattle-man, breaking what had been a long period of silence, "females is ondoubted what Doctor Peets calls a theory with me. But nevertheless, in an onpresumin' lowly way I gives it as my meager jedgment, an' I gives it cold, as how a jealous woman is worse than trant'lers."

"She's plumb locoed for one thing; an' thar ain't no such thing as organisin' to meet her game. For mys'f, I don't want no transactions with 'em; none whatever."

"If I'm thinkin' of folks in particular in connection herewith, it's Dave Tutt an' his wife. Dave an' she's all right now; but thar's shorely a period when she runs on her rope, an' bucks an' pitches to that degree it looks like she's due to bust them bands between her an' Tutt like cobwebs."

"This yere domestic uprisin' breaks on Wolfville as unexpected as a fifth ace in a poker deck, an' leaves the camp all spraddled out. Benson Annie is the lady's name, an' I reckon mebbly she an' Dave's been wedded goin' on six months. The camp attends the nuptials in a body, an' followin' of the festivities, Annie an' Dave tumbles into housekeepin' peaceful as two pups in a basket."

"Wolfville's proud of 'em, an' everytime some ignorant bein' asks about Wolfville, an' the social features of the camp, we allers mentions Tutt an' his wife; an' tells how they keeps house; sorter upholsterin' of our bluff."

"It's mighty likely a month before the time Annie breaks through Dave's lines this way. Dave an' me's due to go over towards the Tres Hernanas about some cattle. Likewise, thar's an English outfit allowin' they'll go along some tomsee, where they've been stackin' in heavy on some ranch lands. They was eager for Dave an' me to trail along with 'em; an' sorter ride head on 'em, an' keep 'em from gettin' mixed up with the scenery—which the same is shorely complicated in the foot hills of the Tres Hernanas—an' losin' themselves a heap."

"Which you'd better do it boys," says Enright. 'S'pose they be some trouble. It's a mighty sight better than havin' 'em go p'intin' a off lone that way. They shore misses the way out if they does, an' the first we all knows these yere Britons will be runnin' Cimmaron in the hills, scarin' innocent folks, an' stampedin' the cattle plumb off the range. It's easier to get along careful with 'em, an' bring 'em back."

"It comes, then, that one mornin' Dave and me an' these yere aliens lines out for the hills. They've got ponies, an' waggons, an' camp outfit to that extent, a casual onlooker might think they aims to be away in the hills for years."

"As we p'int out from the O.K. House, where these Britons has been wrastlin' their chuck pendin' the start, Ann is thar sayin' good-bye to Dave. I notes then, she

ain't seemin' tickled to death none; but don't seem nothin' special of it."

"The Britons is made up of two men, mebbly as old as Enright—brothers is what they be—an' a female, who's the daughter of one of 'em. Which thar's nothin' recent or kittenish about this yere lady, though; an' I reckons she's shore forty years old. I learns later, however, it's this female which Annie resents when she says 'Adios' to Dave."

"It shore strikes me now, when years is past, as some marvellous how a han'some corn-fed female like Annie manages to find a fight with Dave over this yere towerist woman. I'm nacherally slow to go decidin' bets agin a lady's looks, but whatever Annie sees in the appearance of this person which is likely to inveigle Dave, is too many for me. I softens the statement a heap when I says she's uglier than a Mexican sheep."

"However, that don't seem to occur to Annie; an' Doc Peets—who's the wisest sharp in Arizona—allows to me afterwards as how Annie was cuttin' the cards with hers'f desperate to see whether she declares war or not at the very time we make our start. If she does she turns the low card; for she don't say nuthin', an' we gets away, an' all is profound peace."

"Four days later we're in camp by a water-hole in the frill of the foothills. The Britons has got up a wall tent, an' is shorely havin' a high an' lavish time. Dave an' me ain't payin' no attention to 'em speshul, as none is needed or should be. Besides, we has some hard ridin' to do, lookin' up places for a line of sign camps."

"It's the second day when we notices an outfit of Apaches camped down the valley from us. They're all serene an' peaceful enough; with squaws, papooses, an' dogs; an' ain't thinkin' no more of bein' hostile than we be."

"Of course, no sooner does these yere Britons of ours behold this band of savages than they has to go projectin' an' pesterin' round 'em."

"That's the worst thing about a towerist; he's that loaded with curiosity an' that gregarious an' amiable, he has to go foolin' round every stranger he tracks up with. In their ignorance they even gets rood an' insultin' at times. I knows 'em who's that regardless an' imperlite as to ask a rank stranger that away, to pass 'em his gun to look at."

"And so as I says no sooner does them Apaches get near us than these three blessed foreigners is over after 'em ropin' at 'em with questions an' invadin' of 'em an' examin'in' of 'em like the whole Apache tribe's for sale an' they aims to stand in on the play an' acquire 'em if fingers is reasonable."

"I never does know what the female towerist says or does to that partic'lar aborigine, nuthin', most likely; but it ain't a day when one of 'em Injuns settles it with himse'f he wants to wed her. The towerist is in ignor-

ance of the views of this savage who goes about dealin' his game Injun fashion.

"It's this way; Dave an' me trails in one evenin' some weary an' played. It's been a hard ride that day. But the first thing we lays eyes on at the camp shorely livens us up a lot. Thar, tied to the waggon wheels is nine ponies, which the same belongs to the Apaches.

"Whatever be these yere bronchos doin' yere?" says Dave, for we allows the first card outen the box, mebbly the Briton makes a purchase.

"One of the towerists tells a long an' delighted story about the generosity of the Apaches.

"Actooaly," says this towerist, 'these generous savages leads up them nine ponies an' donates 'em.'

"Dave an' me asks questions; an' all thar is to the deal—which it's shore enough to bust Dave's family before it's over—these Injuns brings up the nine ponies all respectful, an' leaves 'em hobbled out, mebbly it's a hundred yards from the Britons, an' rides away. The Britons deemin' this bluff as in the line of gifts, capers over an' possesses themselves of the ponies an' leads 'em in. That's the outside of the story.

"Well, stranger," says Dave, in reply, takin' of the towerist a one side, 'I ain't aimin' to discourage you none, but you-alls has gone an' got some tangled up in your lariat.'

"What for a entanglement is it?" asks the towerist.

"Nuthin'," says Dave, sorter breakin' it to him easy; 'nuthin', only you've done married your daughter to one of them Apaches.'

"When Dave announces this yere truth it shore looks like the Briton's goin' to need whiskey to uphold himse'f. But he reorganises, an' Dave explains that the Injuns, when they trails in with the ponies, is simply shufflin' the cards for a weddin'; offerin' a price for the woman.

"An' when you all hops out an' leads in the ponies," says Dave, 'that does settle it. You agrees to deal right thar. To-morrow, now, this yere buck, whoever he is, will come surgin' in with his relations plumb down to third cousins; an' he expects you'll be dead ready to feed 'em, an' wind up the orgy by givin' over the bride.'

"These recitals of Dave's is plenty horrible to the towerist. He allows we must keep it from his daughter; an' then he puts his whole outfit in our hands, to get 'em safe out o' high grounds.

"Can't we pull our freight in the night?" says the towerist, an' he's shorely anxious.

"Too much moon," says Dave, 'an' then, ag'in, the whole Apache gang's below us in the draw, an' we'd never get by once in a thousand times. No,' goes on Dave, 'one shore thing—we can't back out nor crawl off. We has to play the hand now, plumb through.'

"Then Dave tells the towerist he an' I talks over the weddin' he goes into so inadvertent, an' if thar's a chance to save him from becomin' a father-in-law abrupt, we'll play it to win.

"This yere is the only waggon track out," says Dave to me, after we pow-wows an hour. 'You go down to these Injuns an' find the right one that away, an' tell him the squaw's got a buck now. Tell him he's barred. Which, at this p'int in your revelations, he's due to offer a fight, an' of course you takes him. Tell him at first drink time to-morrow mornin' he finds me ready to fight for the squaw.'

"But this business makes me tired," says Dave, a heap disgusted. 'If these eediot's had let them Injuns alone, or even if they disdains the ponies when they was brought up, this yere could be fixed easy. But now it's fight or give up the woman.'

"Of course thar ain't no use explainin' nuthin' to Injuns. You might as well waste time expoundin' of things to coyotes an' jack rabbits. All that's left for me to do is to trail out after my savage an' notify him that this weddin' he proposes is postponed, an' that all bets is off.

"I finds him easy enough, an' he's shore a haggard-lookin' Injun. He's as ugly as this female towerist he's after. I saw it off on him in Spanish how the game stacks up, an' he displays a mighty baleful spirit. Just as Tutt says he's out to shoot for the squaw; an' as thar's no tellin' away from it, I tells him to paint his f' for war, an' come a-runnin'.

"I has to carry a hard face; for we're shorely in for it. Yere we be four days from Wolfville, an' the Injuns—an' I reckon thar's twenty bucks in the outfit—is camped in between us an' help.

"This Apache who's after the woman is named Black Dog. The next mornin' Tutt saddles up an' rides off to one side of our camp, mebbly it's a quarter of a mile, an' then gets off his pony an' stands thar. We don't onfold to the towerists the details of the play, not even to the Apache's father-in-law. The towerist female is that ignorant of what's goin' on, she's pesterin' 'round all unconscious, makin' bakin' powder biscuit at the time. I looks at her close, an' it strikes me some vigorous, it's a reckless savage who unites his life with hers. She's got a visage to which the aige of a tomahawk presents a frank and open look. But I don't get much time to be disgusted over this Black Dog's taste before he comes p'intin' out from among his people.

"The sun's just gettin' over the hills to the east, an' as it strikes him he's shore a fashionable-lookin' Injun. He ain't got nuthin' on but a war bonnet an' a coat of red an' blue paint. The rest of his trousseau he confines to his Winchester an' a cartridge belt. He's on his war pony, an' the bronco's stripped as bare as this Black Dog is; not a strap from muzzle to tail. The Apache's tied his mane full of ribbons, an' throws a red blanket across his lap for general effect. Take it all over, he's a nifty-lookin' savage.

"So far as the doel goes, Dave ain't runnin' no resk. He stands thar on the ground an' keeps his hoss between him an' this yere Black Dog. It's a play which forces the Apache's hand, too. He's due, bein' Injun, to go circlin' Dave, an' do his shootin' on the canter.

"An' that's what this weak-minded Injun does. He breaks into a lope an' goes sailin' round Dave like a hawk. Durin' these exercises he lays over on the shoulder of his hoss an' bangs away from under his neck with one hand, permiscus.

"This is mere frivolity. Thar ain't no white man could shoot under such conditions; an' Injuns can't shoot, nohow. They don't savey a hind sight that away; an' holds 'way over.

"An', as I remarks, if Dave's hit any it's goin' to shorely be an accident, an' accidents don't happen none in Arizona; leastwise not with guns.

"Mebby this Black Dog's banged away towards Dave three times, when all at once, Dave who's been follerin' of him through the sights for thirty seconds, onhooks his rifle an' the deal comes to a full stop. Dave's shootin' a Sharp's, with 120 grains of powder, an' the way he sends a bullet, caliber .45, plumb through that war pony an' this yere Black Dog, who's hanging on it's off side don't bother him a bit. The pony an' the Black Dog goes over on their heads too dead to bury.

"Dave rides in an' brings the blankets an' war bonnet. Even the female towerist, which is the object of the

meetin', don't seem informed none of the course of events. The fact is she never does acquire the rights of it all till we're two days back on the return trail.

"Thar's no more bother. Injuns is partic'lar people that way, about etiquette as they saveys it, an' followin' Dave's downin' this Black Dog they ain't makin' a moan nor a move. They takes in all plenty solem an' mute, an' goes to layin' out the Black Dog's obsequies without no more notice of us. It was a square deal; they sees that; an' they ain't filin' no objections. As for our end of the game, we moves out for Wolfville, makin' no idle delays whatever.

"Goin' in, Dave, after thinkin' some, suggests to me that it's likely to be a heap good story not to tell Annie.

"Females is illogical, that away, says Dave, 'an' I ain't goin' to have time to eddicate Annie to a proper view of this yere. So, I reckon, it's goin' to be a crafty play not to tell her.'

"The Britons has been gone two weeks, when Annie learns the story. These towerists was plumb tired of Arizona when we trails into Wolfville, an' don't seem to tarry a second, before they trails out for Tucson.

"They just hits a high place or two," says Jack Moore, after he hears of them designs of Black Dog, 'an' they'll be clean out of the country. I don't reckon none they comes back soon, neither.'

"But it's the towerist women that makes the trouble from start to finish. It's a letter from her which she writes back to Dave, allowin' she'll thank him some more, as her preserver, that brings the news to Annie. She gets this missive, an' she an' Mrs. Rucker—who does it all innocent—ups an' rifles an' reads it to each other a whole lot. It's then Annie allows Dave is breakin' her heart, an' prances home for her shaker and quits.

"The whole camp knows the story in an hour, an' sympathises with Dave. Of course, no one's blamin' Annie. She's a female, an' onresponsible for cne thing; an' then ag'in Dave's a heap onlikely to stand condemnations of his wife.

"She's as good a woman as ever wore a hole in a moccasin," says Dave, while he's recoverin' of his spirits at the Red Light bar. An' we all allows she shorely is; an' then everybody looks pensive an' sincere that that away, so's not to harrow Dave none, an' make his burden more.

"But whatever can I do to fetch her back to camp?" says Dave, appealin' to Enright mighty wretched. "I goes plumb locoed if yere keeps on."

"My notion is we all better puts Mrs. Rucker in to deal the game," says Enright. "Mrs. Rucker's a female, an' is shorely due to know what cards to draw. But this oughter be a lesson to you, Dave, not to go projectin' up to strange women no more."

"It's a forced play," says Dave. "Them Injuns has us treed. It's a case of fight or give up the woman, so what was I to do?"

"Well," says Enright, some severe, 'you might at least consult with this towerist woman some. But you don't. You simply gets a gun an' goes trackin' round in her destinies, an' shootin' up her prospects like you has a personal interest. You don't know but she deplores the deal complete. Peets an' me, an' Boggs, an' all the rest of us is your friends; an' nacherally partial on your side. We all thinks you means well. But after all what I says is this: It ain't no surprisin' thing when Annie a-hearin' of these pronounced attentions which you pays this towerist lady is filled with grief. This shootin' up an Apache because he's planning to wed this female some is what I shorely

calls pronounced attentions. What do you think yourself, Peets?"

"Why I readily believe what Dave says," replies Peet. "Ondoubtedly he acts for the best, as he sees it. But jest as you puts it the headlong way he goes after this yere Black Dog; settin' of the war jig the next sun up; an' all without even saying: "let me look at your hand" to this female, justifi's the inference that Dave feels like he's out to down a rival. Of course, I don't say an' I don't believe Dave thinks of this old maid once; but he sees himsf he shore goes to war a heap precipitate an' onconsiderate; an' Annie has ondoubted grounds to buck."

"Which, when you all puts it so clear, I think so, too," says Dave, a mighty sight dejected. "But I ain't been wedded long—ain't more'n what you might call an amatoor husband. What you all oughter do now is h'ep to round her up. If Annie was a bunch of cattle, or a band of ponies, as had stampeded, you'd be in the saddle too quick."

"Mrs. Rucker shore does all she knows to soften Annie. Dave's got a good heart," says she.

"That's nothing to do with his makin' love to the British woman," says Annie, grittin' her teeth like she could eat the sights offen a six-shooter, an' find relief tharby.

"He never makes no love to this woman," says Mrs. Rucker.

"When he ketches her flirtin' with that Injun," demands Annie, 'don't Dave shoot him up a lot? What do you all call makin' love? He never downs no Injuns for me, an' I'm his lawful wife!' An' yere Mrs. Rucker allows, when she reports to Enright an' Dave an' the rest of the outfit in the Red Light, she weeps as if her heart is shorely broke.

"Which the poor girl's to be pitied," says Enright. "Dave," he goes on, turnin' to him some fierce, 'you don't deserve no such devotion as this.'

"That's whatever," says Dan Boggs, lookin' truculent at Dave. "This yere Annie's an angel."

"So thar we be, up against it, an' not a man knows a thing to do to square the deal with Dave's wife. We calls for drinks all 'round an' sets about, an' thinks. At last Dave speaks up in a low-spirited way.

"I reckon she jumps the game for good," he says. "But if she's goin' I wants her to have a layout. If you all cares to go over to the store, I allows I'll lose a blue stack or two, an' win out some duds. If she's goin' I wants her to quit the deal ahead."

"So Dave sets out for the store, an' the rest of us sorter straggles along. Thar's nothin' gay about us. Dave gets a shawl an' a dress, nuthin' gaudy; just a plain red an' yaller. These he packs over to Annie by Mrs. Rucker, who's that wrapped up in the deal she forgets to rustle us our grub utterly.

"Well, it's the onexpected as happens in Wolfville, same as everywhere else. The minute Annie sees the raiment, an' realises how Dave loves her, that settles it. Her heart melts right thar. She ain't sayin' a word; jest ropes onto the dry goods an' starts sobbin' out for the doby, where she an' Dave lives.

"Dave, when he sees this, shakes hands all round, but don't trust bise'f with no remarks. Jest gives our paws a squeeze, like he knows he can rely on our friendship; an' hunts his way across to Annie without a word.

"It's all right about bein' youthful an' light that away," says Enright, after Dave pulls his freight, 'but Tutt oughter remember yereafter, before he goes mixin' with towerists an' Injuns, that he's a married man.'

(No. 2 of the series next week.)

THE WITCH'S RING.

A VERY curious, straggling, sleepy old village is Adlington. Half a century behind the rest of the world, it still sits between the green hills, with its elbows on its knees and its chin in its hands, musing on bygone days, when dead and gone kings held the land under their sway, and when, as its old folk sagely remark, things were not as they are now. There are a great many old people in Adlington; in fact, very few die young there.

The atmosphere is so dreamy and peaceful that excitement cannot exist, and the wear and tear of the busy world is unknown, or, at most, only hums faintly over the hills, like the buzzing of a fly on a sunny pane on a summer day. And so they still sit in their chimney-corners from year to year, and muse, and doze, and dream, until they dream their lives away and take their final sleep. It was to an old crone of this description that I was indebted for my adventure.

In the course of my idle ramblings about the village, I chanced one day to peer over a crumbling wall and discovered an old, disused burial-ground. The brown slabs were broken, prostrate, and scattered, with only here and there a forlorn, unsteady stone standing wearily, and waiting for the time to come when it, too, might fall down and rest with the sleepers beneath.

Scrambling over the low wall, I stooped about among the grass, pushing away the tangled masses of vines and leaves from the faces of slabs, that I might read the inscriptions there. But the suns and storms of over a hundred years had obliterated nearly all the letters, so that only portions of names and dates remained. Finally, down in a deep corner of the inclosure, where the weeds grew thickest and the shade was darkest, I found an old stone which, leaning forward, had protected its face from the storms, and on this stone I read the words:

BARBARA CONWAIL.

Born 1670, Died August 14th, 1730. Age 60 years.

Having been lawfully executed for the practice of witchcraft.

My curiosity was at once aroused. I inquired of several persons as to the history of this woman, but

without success for a time. Finally, however, I found an old woman, who told me the following history of Barbara Conwail, as it had been handed down by her ancestors:

Living in an old stone house at the edge of the village, she was rarely seen—for no one ever crossed her threshold—save when she was occasionally met by a frightened party of children idling away a summer's afternoon holiday in the woods, when she would scowl and pass on, stooping down as she crossed the fields, gathering herbs with which to brew her mighty potions. No one ever interfered with her, however, until a sad year came to Adlington.

An epidemic broke out, and raged with a fury that nothing could withstand. People began to mutter that Barbara, the witch, was the cause of it. Passing along the road, she was stoned by a party of boys, to whom she turned, and, shaking her bony hand, shrieked that the curse was upon them.

Two of the lads sickened and died in a few days, and though scores were carried away in a like manner, an especial import was attached to their death. Barbara began to be watched. They looked through her windows at midnight and found her bending over a seething cauldron, throwing in herbs, muttering cabalistic words, and stirring the mixture with what they reported to be human bones. Old Barbara was working her charms.

So when one morning a man came into town, bruised and covered with mud, and testified that as he rode past old Barbara's house at twelve o'clock the night before he saw the Arch Fiend and the witch in conversation upon the house-top, surrounded by flames, and laughing fiendishly in the lurid glare as they shook their fists at the plague-stricken village sleeping below, his tale found ready credence.

The fact that he was an habitual drunkard, and had, on more than one occasion, rolled from his house in a drunken stupor and passed the night in a ditch, dreaming wild dreams, did not in the least detract from the belief of the simple villagers in his vivid account of this scene.

When he related how this pair of demons had pounced upon him, and had first tortured and then thrown him



[The atmosphere is so dreamy and peaceful.]

senseless into a ditch, their indignation became uncontrollable.

Old Barbara was tried, condemned, and hanged, though she protested in her innocence to the last. The little sum of money found in her possession was used to buy that grave-stone—as no one would dare appropriate it—and to this day, if anyone were bold enough to go to her grave at midnight on the same day of the year on which she was hanged, and say: "Barbara, I believe you were innocent," at the same time stretching out his hand over the grave, she would appear to him and place in his hand a talisman.

This talisman would bring fortune as long as he retained it, but at some time in his life the witch would return to him and claim her own.

The old woman ended her story in a low, impressive monotone, which, with her earnestness and sincere belief in what she said, almost carried conviction to me in spite of reason. As I sauntered away, ridiculing these ignorant and superstitious village folk, I found myself, almost unconsciously, wandering back through the old burial ground to the witch's grave.

Carelessly glancing at the inscription I was surprised to find that upon that very day was the one hundred and fiftieth anniversary of her death, and still more surprised when the thought occurred to me of watching at her grave that night. I ridiculed and scoffed the idea. Where was my boasted common sense and incredulity? But still, returning ever, came that wayward thing called fancy—and it conquered.

The world was wild and weird that night when I stole forth from the village. The wind was moaning through the trees and sobbing piteously; the black clouds were driven in broken patches across the sky, now letting down the moonshine, and again shrouding all in blackest night, and making the shadows chase each other about and steal round corners upon one in a manner that made me wince in spite of myself.

Climbing the low stone wall—rather nervously, I confess—I stole away through the old, down-trodden graves, pushing through the weeds and briars as silently as possible, and making my way towards that dark, dreary corner where the old witch reposed. A graveyard at noon is a very different spot from a graveyard at midnight, especially if one is there to seek an interview with a spirit.

I reached the place and stood by the tomb. It still lacked a few minutes of twelve, and as I stood there watching the moonlight flitting over the graves, I longed for a little ray to creep in with me. But no—approaching and receding and wavering all about me, it never touched this grave, but fled away as often as it approached, as though frightened at the black shadow for ever lurking there.

By-and-bye the village clock tolled twelve. As the slow, tremulous tones stole out on the night, the wind ceased moaning, the clouds covered the face of the moon, the insects stopped chirping, and when the last stroke was finished, the almost unbearable silence was broken only by my own breathing, which I strove in vain to suppress. The darkness was intense and I could see nothing. A terrible feeling of guilt and

terror seized me, that I, a mortal, should be intruding there at such an hour. Mechanically I strove to speak the words I had been told, but my lips refused to form a sound.

Still I stood in that awful black silence, chilled with fear, until with a mighty effort I reached out my arm over the grave, and grasped—a hand.

It was only for an instant—not that, for it was jerked away in a twinkling—but long enough to feel how warm and velvety it was, and how small. Not that I lingered there to reflect upon these novel qualities in the hand of a ghost—and an old witch at that—for you altogether mistake my bravery in supposing it; but it was after I had cleared the old wall at a bound and was out on the moonlight road, walking at a rattling good pace away from the place, that I recalled it.

From a state of intense cold, I had changed to burning heat. The touch of those soft fingers thrilled me through as with an electric shock, and I walked faster still in my excitement.

Gradually the consciousness forced itself upon me that I held something in one of my clenched hands. There was first a glitter and then a sparkle, as the moonlight fell into the hollow of my upraised hand, and I saw there a glittering ring, set with flashing stones. The icicles began slipping down by back again, and I hurried on.

Some persons may be inclined to deride my nervousness on this occasion, but I assure such that I am not naturally a timid man. I have a medal hanging in my room at home which asserts that I am not a timid man, and, above all, I had always been particularly devoid of superstitious fear; but truth compels me to say that I not only lighted all the lights on reaching my room at the little inn that night, but turned them very high into the bargain, and that I made a systematic inspection of all the cupboards, and removed from its peg a long cloak that was hanging in a very suggestive position on the wall. This done, I sat down—with my back against the wall—and examined the ring.

It was a quaint old ring, curiously carved and massive. The setting was composed of several small coloured stones set in a circle about a large diamond. My financial circumstances had rendered it unnecessary for me to acquaint myself with precious stones and their values, so that I could only surmise that the ring was somewhat valuable. Considering the excited condition of my nerves by this time, it was not strange that I should start when my eye fell upon the name that was inscribed in quaint letters inside the ring—"Barbara."

I sat and mused upon the whole adventure; what the crone had told me—the graveyard, the ring, and (this thought returned to me the oftenest) the thrilling touch of that soft hand in the darkness.

Perhaps I should say here that I called myself an old bachelor, and had never been in love—that is, with any mortal. I did not think that I was devoid of sentiment or feeling, for I often dreamt of love, and worshipped beautiful things of my own fancy; but my life had been thrown among boys and men, and woman was far away and a mystery. A motherless home, a stern father, a hardworking student's life at college, a stranger struggling for bread and reputation in a great city—one can perceive how it could be that I had made few acquaintances among women. In reality I was only twenty-five, but much experience and a busy life had made me feel older; so, as I said, I called myself a bachelor.

I have given this brief history of myself in order to



prepare the way for another confession. I was falling in love with the owner of that soft, warm hand. It was preposterous, but it was true. I began to doubt my reason. In vain I tried to remember that Barbara, the witch, was an old, ugly woman. The only picture I could call up was that of a beautiful young girl with—but words fail me; only she was far from ghastly, but was as warm and substantial and full of life as that hand had seemed to be.

The fire-irons fell with an unearthly clatter, and startled me out of my dreams. I went to bed to soothe my nerves with sleep, and lay awake most of the night with the lamps burning.

Fortune smiled upon me from that night. Two years of busy city life had passed, and old Barbara's talisman was still unreclaimed, when one day—do you believe in love at first sight? Well, if the first appearance of Walter Wyman's sister had not conquered me, as she stood under the parlour lamps, a revelation of beauty and youth, the touch of her hand when she welcomed her brother's friend would have enslaved me for ever. Never had a touch so thrilled me since—since I had held the witch's hand in the graveyard. The same peculiar shock passed through me, and the memory of that spectral night came over me like a flash.

But I did not start out to tell a love story. Let me briefly say that I fell in love, hopelessly and ridiculously in love, and that I acted just like all lovers have done since the world began. It doesn't matter much about a man's age. At twenty-seven he will conduct himself pretty much as he would have done at seventeen, and so I wrote verses, and sighed, and tormented myself with a thousand hopes and fears, and grew hot and cold by turns, and wonderfully timid, and prided myself upon concealing it all, when, as a matter of fact, the state of my feelings was perfectly apparent to all my acquaintances.

Matters were in this interesting state, when one day an opportunity occurred of which I availed myself with a degree of skill and presence of mind that I am proud

of to this day. It all came about through my asking the young lady if she believed in ghosts.

"I suppose I should," said she, laughing, "considering my experience."

Of course, I implored an explanation, and she related to me the following story:

"It was about two years ago when a party of girls, just home from school, were visiting a friend down in the country. One of the girls had heard a foolish old story about a witch's grave, and some nonsense about her annual appearance, and a talisman, and when I expressed my incredulity they braved me to put it to the test. What is the matter? The place? A little town called Adlington.

"Foolishly I went to look at the grave, and accepted their challenge, and received a terrible fright. I carried out their instructions and stretched my arm over the grave. It was so dark I could see nothing, but some one seized my hand. I was so benumbed with fear that I could not cry out, but could only fly through the lonely graveyard to where my trembling companions were awaiting me in the field. It

was a foolish adventure, for I fell ill, and it cost me a valuable ring, which was left to me by poor Aunt Barbara. 'For her little namesake,' she said, when she sent it across the sea to me. You see, the ring was a little large for my finger, and was pulled off by—by—"

"By me," I interrupted, taking the lost ring from my pocket.

It was time for Barbara (I forgot to say that was her name) to be startled now. I hope I may say that I came out strong on that occasion. I told my story in a very impressive way; lingered over the effect of the witch's hand on my heart; spoke of the good fortune the talisman had brought me; made a very pretty allusion to Barbara the

witch reclaiming her own—for was she not a witch, after all, as I could testify, having felt her charms?—and, finally, not only offered to return the ring, but to give myself into the bargain.

She took both.

PAUL ROPER.



Foolishly I went to look at the grave.

Mother * and * Daughter.



THE lady was evidently in a hurry, or surely she would have waited a little longer to see the result of the accident—an accident caused by the reckless driving of her own coachman. She was seated in a very smart-looking victoria; and turning a corner near the park her horses had knocked over an old woman. A crowd collected instantly, but the lady instead of alighting merely called a policeman to her and asked if the woman was killed.

No, she was not killed, certainly, but she was dazed and flustered and seemed to have a difficulty in breathing. Only a difficulty in breathing. Of course the lady was not responsible for such a very common complaint as that. It might not even be the result of the accident. Perhaps the poor soul always had a difficulty in breathing.

At any rate the concert to which the lady was hurrying would assuredly not be postponed, and a guinea ticket could not be wasted for so slight a cause. Suppose the old woman's breathing should become more difficult; supposing, in fact, it should cease—would she, the lady, be wanted?

The policeman told her in the event of an inquest her coachman would most certainly be called.

"Very well, here is my address," and she drew out a very elaborate, gold-mounted card-case. "Where will they take the poor creature? To St. George's Hospital? I will call to-morrow and inquire after her. In the meantime there may be things she will want. Give this sovereign to the authorities and ask them to look after her."

And then the lady spoke a word to her coachman and drove away, leaving her character behind her.

They were not very hard on her, after all. Was she not handsome, and richly dressed, and prosperous-looking? The coachman was driving a little carelessly. Yes; but was that his mistress's fault? How was she to know he was endangering the lives of passers-by, and undoubtedly the old woman had been staring about her in a helpless sort of way. Nay, had she not been regarding the occupant of this very carriage as it dashed forward, careless whether or not she stood dangerously near the horses? And the park on a bright, sunny afternoon was meant for just such brilliant equipages and handsome ladies; and poor, dazed old bodies should not wander about with no one to look after them. So the crowd, though composed mainly of humble folk, was not very hard on the pretty lady, for all she tossed a sovereign so carelessly and drove away so fast.

Meanwhile the poor creature who had had the misfortune to stand in the way of the high-stepping cobs was being borne tenderly enough to the nearest hospital. A woman not more than sixty years of age, although all those about her spoke of her as old. But then her hair was scanty and quite white, and her face was deeply furrowed, and, more than all, she had that look of helplessness which belongs either to the very old or the very young.

A cab had been called, and strong arms had lifted her in and supported her tenderly on the way.

"You're hearing it bravely, mother," said a rough man who had volunteered his services.

She turned her pale, dim eyes upon him.

"Don't call me that," she said, "I have no child."

"Head a little queer," thought the man.

But when a little later she was comfortably resting in one of the hospital beds she talked rationally enough, and was gently grateful for all the care that was taken of her.

"No, I don't feel no pain," she said in answer to an inquiry of the nurse. "What did the doctor say?"

"He said the spine was injured."

"Ha! that means my back's broke; I thought as much. Well, my heart was broke fifteen years ago. Folk can't live fifteen years with a broken back, can they? I'm glad of that."

"Have you no one belonging to you?" asked the nurse; "no one who ought to be told of your condition?"

"Not a soul, dearie, not a soul. My old man died six years ago come Christmas. His heart was broke too. He lived nine years, but he died of it at last. Mine's tougher, mayhap, for it wasn't the grief after all that killed me, but the beautiful lady's horses. No, there's no one to care about me, no one in all the wide world."

Notwithstanding this assertion the next day some one did inquire for her, and came up the long bare room, and sat down by the poor creature's bed. A lady dressed in silks and velvets—showily, brightly dressed; with gold ornaments flaunting in the sunshine, and a combination of colours and material which good taste would have avoided.

But to the invalid all this brilliancy and richness was pleasing. She put out her hand and stroked the feathers and laces; and the caress seemed to surprise and touch their wearer. She had regarded this visit to the hospital as a dreadful penance inflicted on her by her coachman's negligence, and had undertaken it in no contrite or gentle spirit. She had expected reproaches, lamentations, tears—anything but the gentle goodwill she was met with. Almost to her own surprise she bent down and said:

"I am sorry for your accident. So sorry that I was the cause of it."

"No need to be, dearie," was the answer. "I ain't sorry. And as it had to happen 'twas better it should ha' happened to me. Not but what you had ought to be more careful, for you might ha' knocked down and killed some one whose life was dear to 'em. 'Tain't quite right, the way you grand folk has."

Grand! Her listener's lips framed the word as if in surprise, but gave it no utterance.

"Not that I suppose you ses to your coachman: 'Drive over the old woman; it don't matter,' but you acts all your lives as if old women didn't matter."

She was lying back peacefully on her pillow, maundering on in a quiet way, stopping now and then as weakness with giant strides gained upon her.

"Are you in pain?" asked the lady.

"No, dearie, and the doctor says I shan't be no more. All the pain's over. I remember seeing your face just

as you come dashing by yesterday. I was walking along thinking of my girl—my girl."

Her restless fingers clutched at the coverlet, and the worn face was distorted with emotion.

"What of her?" asked the lady, putting her gloved hand on the bony, withered one near her. "Why were you thinking particularly of her yesterday?"

"I warn't; I'm allus thinking of her—allus, allus. If I sees a bright face or a pretty gownd I says to myself: 'That's how my girl might have looked.' And then it all comes over me fresh as if it just happened."

"Tell me about her. How did you lose her?"

"I didn't lose her. She left me of her own free will. Left her mother and father and her happy home because, I suppose, we weren't good enough for the likes of her. Left us for a man she'd known a couple of months. For eighteen year she'd been the light of our eyes; and he I don't suppose cared for her as many weeks—threw her off, mayhap, for some newer face; and serve her right, serve her right."

It was wonderful and horrible to see the energy which she seemed to gather up in remembering her wrongs. All the peaceful weakness of approaching death had fled, and she trembled with eagerness to tell her tale.

"Do not be so harsh," said the lady. "You should be at peace with every one now. You should forgive her."

"Never. My old man was the only thing dearer to me than her in the world, and she killed him. He died by inches through nine long years, pining to see his little girl. When he lay a-dying he spoke of her and forgave her, but I never will."

"Perhaps she was not so much to blame. Perhaps the fault was more her lover's than hers; and—and—she may have loved him."

"And hadn't we loved her? Hadn't we bin good to her? Why shouldn't she ha' trusted our sense and experience? What had we lived for and thought of but her? What was we working and saving money for but to get her a good husband? When the young fellow we'd fixed on up and spoke to her, and she give him a saucy answer, did we worrit and torment the girl? 'No,' we says, 'she's young and shy, and don't look to be married yet, let her bide.' And we did let her bide. I wish we'd forced her to take the man whether she'd wanted or not. Mayhap she'd a bin a honest woman now."

"Tell me something more of her, of yourself," said the lady. "Did you always live in London?"

"No, dearie; we lived in the country when we had the child. But we left becos we were ashamed to meet our neighbours, knowing what they knew of her. So we gave up our home and our little business and come to London, and lived just from hand to mouth. It didn't seem no good to work any more. We'd put by enough for the two buryin's—my old man's and mine."

"Would you like to be buried in the country, with trees waving and pretty flowers blooming above you?"

"No, no, dearie. Beside my old man—beside my old man. The child'll never lie near us; but us two'll be together. Perhaps she's at the bottom of some river. It's what the likes of her often comes to, arsting your pardon for mentioning such things. Such a pretty baby as she was—such a dear, sweet, happy little soul. We called her Daisy——"

The lady stopped suddenly, and a bracelet with which she had been playing clattered to the ground. It was a broad gold band, with the name "Marguerite" blazoned on it in diamonds.

"Be you going, ma'am?" asked the old woman, as her visitor rose. "You've been very kind to stay with me so long. Will you tell me your name?"

Her name! Which of all the names given her in love, in scorn, in mockery, could she tell the dying woman?

Suddenly she knelt by the bed.

"Think of me as—as Daisy," she said. "Think of me as if I were your own girl come to soothe your dying moments. Do I—do I remind you at all of her?"

"No, dearie; she was much younger, and her hair was dark. Yours is bright, like sunshine."

"But if I should ever meet her—such strange things happen—may I say you forgave her?"

"Say her father forgave her. She broke his heart, but he forgave her."

"But you, her mother, oh! you would not be so cruel as to die without one word of forgiveness for her? You have forgiven me, a stranger, for being the cause of your death, surely you would not be less tender to your own child? Suppose she came to you now, a sinner, but repentant, prosperous and happy to all appearance, but in reality, sorrowing, oh! so bitterly, for the past——"

"I should curse——"

"No, no!" shrieked Marguerite, "don't say the word. What if since she left you she had no one to guide, to befriend her? What if the man she believed in turned traitor and left her penniless in the world? What if she had thought of her happy home when it was too late? What if she feared you, her mother, too much to seek you again? Wouldn't you at least remember that her father had forgiven her, and tell her what he said of her when he was dying?"

The old woman's jaw had dropped. In that last spasm of righteous anger, death had made a terrible forward spring. The end was very near now. Her voice was faint and husky, and tearless sobs shook her whole frame as she spoke.

"He said: 'My poor little girl, my poor little girl, may God forgive her and take her in His arms once more!'"

There was silence for a moment. Marguerite gathered the feeble head to her breast, and with a white face but dry eyes wiped the damp brow and pressed her lips to it.

"I feel better, dearie," said the old woman at last. "I am going to see my old man."

"Don't go without a word of forgiveness," pleaded the lady passionately. "How will you bear to meet him and say with your dying breath you cursed your child? Think when her time comes there'll be no loving husband waiting for her. She may not have a friend beside her to smooth her pillow. Oh, don't, don't die without a word."

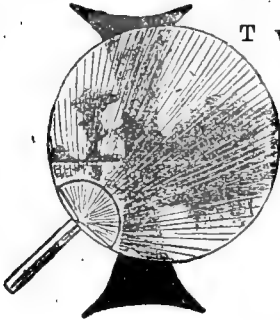
The faint breath came fainter and fainter. A visible change stole over the grey face. Twice she tried to speak. It was a struggle against death. For a moment she lay so still the lady thought the end had come. Then the dim eyes opened once more, and, with a last desperate effort came the words:

"My poor little girl! May God—forgive—take her—in His arms——"

R. HENRY.



: What the : Camera Revealed.



I was just after Christmas last year when the inhabitants of a small village down in Cornwall were thrown into a state of intense curiosity by the unnatural appearance and strange behaviour of a young gentleman who had come to live amongst them.

Although by his form and face he could not have been much over

twenty, his hair was as white as snow!

He kept but one servant, who managed everything, and to her he seldom spoke. He was studying to enter the Church, and that was the sum and difference of all that could be ascertained about him.

One day a gentleman—who it was afterwards known was a near relative of the strange man, and had come all the way from the East Indies to search for him—called.

He was struck dumb at the alteration of this young fellow—who was really his deceased sister's husband—and, in spite of his being a disbeliever in everything approaching the supernatural, he was compelled to accept as facts the following startling events, or to doubt the evidence of his senses.

* * * * *

"You ask why, at the age of twenty-four, my hair is white? Why I have given up the profession I loved to become a priest of the church? You, her brother, understand how dearly I loved her, so I will tell you, although a word about it has never before passed my lips.

"But first let me ask you, have you ever studied the subject known as hypnotism? No? Then in all the days of your life to come never begin to. Shun the very thought of it as you would the most deadly poison, for a knowledge of it would arm you with a power that no human being should possess.

"But something born within me led me to grow up fascinated with this mysterious science, and every spare hour was devoted to it, till by my own methods, and my own discoveries, I could cast a subtle spell for good or evil on all those who came in familiar contact with me.

"Dear Emmie witnessed many of my experiments, and got as much interested in it as I was, and often begged me to hypnotise her. This I always refused to do

with a firm resolve in my own mind that I never would.

"But last Christmas—we had been married only a month, you know—we stood in the dusk of the evening gazing at the falling snow, and the dead white view all round us. The servants had gone to their own homes; we were alone in our comfortable room. Suddenly she drew the blinds, and turning to me, exclaimed with delight:

"‘Harry, I will tell you how we will spend this evening. You shall hypnotise me.’

"In vain I protested. She grasped my hands, and looked into my eyes. The full glare of the Christmas log fell on her lovely face, and magnified her bewitching beauty, and I was as helpless to refuse the request which came with the love that streamed from her eyes as the most subdued subject ever under my influence had been able to resist my command.

"Playfully I pressed her back into a chair, seated myself in front of her, and, holding her hands in mine, gazed into the eyes that still sparkled with fun.

"Gradually the signs I knew so well passed in succession over my darling's face; finally came the long deep sigh and the eyes closed in profound sleep.

"Then I began the mystic passes, and a fresh wave of wondrous beauty broke over her fair young face each time my quivering hands passed from the crown of glossy hair to the tips of her tapered fingers, till I stood in awe at the picture of spiritual loveliness I had been instrumental in creating.

"But the passion for experiment was on me. I excited the organ phrenologists call ‘tune,’ and she sang in a voice and with a charm no words could describe.

"I excited the organ of ‘veneration.’ She fell on her knees in an attitude of deep devotion, and clasped her hands in prayer.

"Presently her position changed. Her face assumed a different expression.

"I was fascinated and rooted to the spot.

"It was the living, breathing image of the Madonna!

"A new thought struck me. I would photograph her.

"It was but the work of a minute to switch on the electric lamp and adjust the camera already prepared for a different purpose.

"To myself I counted ‘One, two,’ and the photograph was taken.

"I looked towards my wife. Oh, Heaven! what did I see? The glow of life that shone on her face was fading, as the light from a waning lamp.

"The next instant my arms were thrown round her,

but she fell back heavily on the cushion I managed to push beneath her.

"'Emmie! Emmie, dearest, wake up!' I called; but there came no response, and my own voice sounded strange and far away.

"There was no throb to her pulse! There was no sign of breathing on the glass I held before her!

"I tried to part the hands that were still clasped as in prayer; but they were held like a vice, and fast growing cold!

"Again the glare from the Christmas log lit up the room, but this time it fell on the face, white and lifeless, as though chiselled from marble.

"Oh, the agony of those minutes! She was dead! And all the happiness and hopes of my life had fled for ever.

"I fell on my knees beside her, and there, alone with death, I prayed, in my utter despair, with a faith I had never possessed before.

"I prayed that, as in the days of old, a miracle might be performed, that life might be restored to her, for I could not live without her.

"And with my hand holding her silken tresses, in my irrational anguish hoping my prayer would be granted, I actually watched, expecting to see the brightness come back to her eyes, and the life-blood tint her cheeks.

"Suddenly a strange sensation of fortitude came over me. I realised that she was dead, and I gave the last fond kiss on the cold lips and brow.

"I no longer felt alone. As though urged by some unseen presence, I rose to my feet, walked straight over to the camera, took it to the adjoining laboratory, and began to complete the picture I had a feverish longing to look at.

"So real was the impression that some one stood near me, that I could feel, in my fancy, a warm breath on my face.

"And there, in the silent laboratory, on that night of all nights, I mechanically worked on, as though my actions and thoughts were controlled by some outward intelligence.

"Presently the negative was finished, and, with the same feverish haste, I held it up to view; but the sight that I looked at took my senses away.

"When my reason returned a looking-glass revealed the image of myself, standing motionless as a statue, with hair as white as snow.

"Then I awoke as from a dream, and the truth dawned on me. I had lived the agony of a lifetime in a few short hours.

"But the picture in my hand filled my heart with joy.

"My prayer had been answered—a miracle had been wrought. Her spirit had risen, always to be with me.

"Look!"

The brother took the photograph, and his face expressed wonder, awe, and bewilderment, as he looked.

It was a clear and positive photograph of two figures—one in a kneeling posture, and the other as if in the act of rising from behind her.

As you looked at them the effect was most singular.

It could only be roughly described as a woman kneeling with her back to a looking-glass, and as you looked at

her, the reflection of her image would appear rising behind her.

Both were clearly and distinctly brought out. The face of the former expressed infinite sorrow, and that of the latter rapturous joy.

"Either it is a miracle," he said, as he handed the picture back, "or science is about to pierce the veil which has so long divided the natural from the supernatural."

R. H. MATHERS.



*She fell on her knees
in an attitude of deep
devotion.*





As a rule, men keep their madness to themselves. I will be an exception. My instincts are those of a confirmed gambler. I believe in one god, the god of chance, and in luck, his prophet. Hitherto my offerings and sacrifices have been insufficient to appease him, and he has treated me with marked malevolence, but I feel sure that the solution of his mystery lies in the square and its two diagonals, with payments of which figure we number our dwelling-houses, page our books, and count our wealth to-day—only I cannot discover it.

And I am convinced that the life of every one of us is bound up in one numerical term, and that the successful man is he, and he only, to whom the god of chance has vouchsafed, with his knowledge or without his knowledge, the figures of his number, and who, consciously or unconsciously, regulates his life by the powers of it—but I have sought for mine in vain.

Not long ago I conceived the idea, wherefore or wherefrom I cannot tell, that my number was thirty-two, and in every circumstance of life into which figures could be introduced I made it my fetish, but up till now it has only proved my bane.

I bought No. 32 in lotteries, but never won; I only dealt with tradesmen who lived at No. 32 in their streets, but reaped no advantage; I turned to page 32 in all the new books, but found no Bath Kol; I sought for a girl whose initials were C.B., the third and second letters of the alphabet, forced myself to fall in love with her, but she married a man whose figures were invested; I tried to discover the cipher of my life by taking every thirty-second letter in Shakespeare's plays. I bought thirty-two editions, from the first folio to the edition of Bowdler, and by counting, now in one, now in another, and by modifying the spelling, I connected a string of words in which must lie concealed the cryptogram of my destiny. But I had no Daniel to interpret it. My philosopher's stone wouldn't turn even into bread. I was growing poorer, insaner every day.

I determined to travel, realised all the property I could, and started for Europe with £4,000. My objective point was Naples. On arriving there I drove straight to the Grand Hotel, and asked at the office if I could have room, No. 32. The clerk stared, and said it was a sitting-room and engaged. Could I have No. 64? No, that was also engaged. No. 128? That was vacant,

but very high up; but he could give me a much better room lower down, but I could have that if specially desired.

I took it. I unpacked, changed, and found my allotted place at the *table d'hôte*. On my right sat one of the most beautiful women I have ever seen. Her large, dark eyes, when she turned to scrutinise me as a newcomer, seemed to question my soul and demand a sympathetic reply. She was a splendid woman, sitting upright half a head taller than the rest of us. A model for a sculptor, not a painter. Her wonderfully fitting dress, a dead pearl grey. Her only ornament, a large ruby forming the head of a gold serpent twisted four times round her wrist.

She began conversing in French with a dapper little man opposite, then in Italian with his Umberto-typed neighbour, then in German with the man on her right, with a head all money-making squareness at the back, of philosophical spectacles and beard in front. Presently she turned and asked me for the salt in English. The ice was broken. We conversed during the rest of dinner on a variety of topics, travel, destiny, men and books, Naples and Warsaw, where I found she lived.

Afterwards we sat together among the oleanders in the square, cool, marble-paved hall over our coffee, listening to the band. Even "O bella Napoli" seemed to become fresh and new under the spell of her society, and the richness of her conversation fascinated me. As she rose at ten to say good-night, she held out her hand, and as I detained it a moment, the snake bracelet slipped round as if alive.

"Will you come to me for afternoon tea to-morrow at, say, half-past four? My salon is No. 32."

I accepted with pleasure and then went out and leant on the balcony outside the smoking-room looking over the sea. No. 32! At last my number is going to turn up, I thought. How lovely the night is when a new love has risen to illumine it.

For a long time I stood there watching the red zig-zag of lava on the cone of Vesuvius. Suddenly the wind changed and swept the smoke between it and the moon, and the red became like unto the red of a ruby.

Madame did not appear at dinner, but I shall see her again later. I have been to tea. She has contrived

with a woman's subtle skill to convert the bare hotel salon No. 32 into a veritable boudoir. A few draperies, piles of books and flowers, everywhere, have changed it, as if by magic. When I was shown in she was lying on a long couch, and beckoned me to take a low armchair arranged at its side, with the tea-table in front of it.

As I sat there looking up at her, and drinking in her beauty while she talked rapidly of what she had seen and done and thought, I determined she was not only the most beautiful but the cleverest woman I had ever met.

I was beginning to give my heart to her in earnest, when the subject of cards suddenly came up. Did I play *écarté*? What a game that requires thirty-two cards, my number? I wish she would stake herself; I could play my life, my soul against it, and be sure of winning now. Would I like a game? I should be delighted. She showed me where to find the cards, and we began. She suggested rather high stakes, but I did not care. I was elated. Her play was very good, and the fates were still against me.

I lost, but I felt that the turning-point in my life had come. When I rose to go as the dressing-gong sounded, she said, with her large eyes full on mine: "I am sorry you have been unlucky. If you will come up after dinner, say, at nine, you will have your revenge."

I am writing this in bed. There is a sister, with big white wings on her head, looking after me. You will wonder why. Why? Why is it? I forget. Oh, yes, I know. I told her I must send a few lines to a friend. I mean I told the sister. She let me write, and promised—if anything happens—to send them to you at once. Where was I? Why do they put hot bandages on my head—red hot, I tell you—the marble was so cold. The marble? That's it, the marble.

I remember. I went to play *écarté* with Madame after dinner last night. It's coming back to me clearer, quite clear now. I took all the money I had with me, fascinated, enchanted; it was to be my lucky day. As she sat opposite me with that large ruby still about her wrist, my whole soul went out to her.

I watched every flash of the jewel, every subtle swing of her waist as she dealt or picked up her cards, but I feared her eyes, I wanted to keep cool. We played and played, and I kept on losing till I had lost all. Then I looked up and met her gaze, which held me with the potency of unsatisfied thirst.

"Still unlucky, poor little man," she said, and looking at the ivory tablets at her side, added: "I see I have

won £2,000, which you have paid; you are honourable I like you. Take another chance. I will play you one game double or quits."

I looked at my notes. It would be the thirty-second game. That decided me.

"One moment," I whispered feverishly. "Will you be more generous, and if I win will you be my wife?"

Her eyes seemed to envelop me as she held out her hand to meet my grasp, and said slowly:

"I will."

We cut, played; the game was three all. I seemed fascinated by the ruby on her wrist. It was her deal. My eyes were following the stone, and—I swear it—I saw her pass the king. I was now as if in a dream. Of

course, she turned it up and won the odd trick. I was ruined, and I had lost her. Suddenly my love, my fascination turned into hate, which forgot itself. I jumped up and, standing swaying with both hands leaning on the table, whispered hoarsely across it:

"Cheat!"

She rose to her full height. I can see her now, and I can hear her voice saying:

"Sir! leave my room!"

I staggered out backwards as if from the presence of a horror that was royal. Nurse, ice, ice; my head is on fire. I leant over the balustrade, as I had leaned over the balcony last night, looking into the square hall, lit only at this late hour by the full moon. Between the oleanders where she had sat last night, the marble looked so cool, and behind the white-curtained windows, in the white walls there was sleep.

Could I sleep? I love marble. Nurse, more ice. I have nearly done. I heard a step; heard quick breathing behind me; felt a strong push. I was falling. I saw

but one thing in the moonlight—the red flash of a ruby; the rest was white, the marble was white. Do men sleep on marble—or under it? Nurse, nurse, this is the last hand; give me another card. Ha! it is. I mark the king, the king, the king of Terr—

E. C. WAGGENER.



"Sir! leave my room!"

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CHAPTER XVI.

THE MESSENGER FROM LEGHORN.

It was the morning of my second day in Naples, and no news had reached me of Kennard, or of the man from whose dagger his meteor-like dash through the railway carriage at Pisa had saved me. I had put up at the Hotel Victoria on the Parthenope Quay, whence I could watch the blue waters of the beautiful Gulf for the coming of the *Queen of Night*, and all through the day after my arrival I had been thrown into a fever every time the smoke of an incoming steamer appeared on the horizon. But I was doomed to disappointment; none of the vessels seeking harbour proved to be the graceful craft which the detective had called a "murder-trap."

My impatience was becoming almost unbearable. Not only did I chafe against the delay in the arrival of the ship, but I feared from Kennard's absence that some harm had befallen him, and that unaided I should never be able to cope with the difficulties that beset me. Acting on the advice he had given I had abandoned disguise and resumed my own garment before engaging a room at the hotel, and I was beginning to consider whether my best course would not be to confide my position and anxiety to the English Consul, in the hope that he would be more helpful than his colleague at Genoa. Once I put on my hat to go to the Consulate, but the thought of the stone cell at the Convent of Santa Lucia overcame me, and I turned again to vainly scanning the sky-line beyond the Bay.

In the ordinary course the *Queen of Night* should have arrived at Naples early on the previous day, and as the weather was fine and calm the delay was quite inexplicable. It was now eleven o'clock in the forenoon, so that she was nearly thirty hours overdue, which, unless something had happened, was out of all proportion to any legitimate detention in so short a voyage. To my other anxieties began to be added wild thoughts of collisions, fires, shipwrecks, and a hundred other perils of the deep.

At last I reached such a pitch that to stay kicking my heels about the hotel and staring out to sea was no longer possible to me. I decided to go down to the quays and endeavour to find someone who could aid my inquiries by interpreting for me, and, glad to be up and doing anything, I sallied forth at once. Passing through the Via Gioja I chanced to notice a name over a doorway which filled me with a sudden inspiration—the name of the agent whom

Nathan had mentioned as his correspondent in Naples, one Signor Girolamo Volpe. If anyone in the city was likely to be able to give news of the ship this was the man, and at all risks I determined to try him.

I say all risks because there was every probability that if he knew who I was he would serve my enemies rather than myself by taking steps to curtail my liberty. Vizard, if still a free agent, having seen me on my way south, would have been certain to apprise their correspondent of the fact with instructions to throw obstacles in my way—if nothing worse—and it would not therefore be safe to make inquiry in my own name and person. As I was still wearing the mercantile uniform in which I had gone ashore at Genoa, I went first to a clothier's and bought a ready-made tourist suit, changing into it, by permission of the proprietor, in a room behind the shop. Then, having given instructions for my uniform to be sent to the hotel, I returned immediately to the Via Gioja.



I walked up to the outer office.

The offices of Mr. Girolamo Volpe, though in a large and handsome building, were not themselves on a lordly scale, consisting, so far as I was able to judge during my brief acquaintance with them, of a couple of rooms on the ground floor just inside the main entrance. Assuming a confident air, I walked up to the outer office and found it a poky little place, with an ink-splashed counter inside running from wall to wall. A middle-aged, seedy-looking Italian clerk was writing at a desk behind the counter, and standing near was a portable Japanese screen between five and six feet high.

"You act as agents for the owners of the steamer *Queen of Night*?" I asked of the clerk, who came forward with alacrity.

"Yase, sar—Mr. Volpe is agent," was the reply, which promised a sufficient knowledge of English for my purpose.

"Then where the dickins is the ship?" I proceeded, adopting the manner of the irascible Briton on his travels. "Here have I been waiting for her ever since yesterday morning. I was unable to board

her in London, so came across the Continent to join her here for the rest of the trip. The delay is very annoying!"

At that moment I caught sight of the shining top of a bald head, raised an inch above the screen, as if someone behind it were changing his position. It disappeared so quickly as not to distract my attention from the clerk's reply.

"It is mose unforchnit, sar, that you should be so dis-

commode," he said. "I regret ver moosh that there can be no booking per *Queen of Night* from Naples. After leaving Genoa she called for orders at Leghorn, and



I caught sight of the shining top of a bald head.

received instructions by cable from the owners to proceed to, Cagliari in Sardinia, whence she goes direct to Alexandria. She does not come to Naples at all."

This was terrible news, and I was so overcome that I nearly betrayed myself. The villains had evidently arranged that the ship on leaving Genoa should call at Leghorn so that Zavertal could be informed whether I was still safely out of the way at the Convent. In this case they could, without risk of complications, carry out the original programme of visiting Naples; but, if anything should have gone wrong with their plans with regard to the quieting of myself, pursuit on my part was to be stalled off by the simple process of avoiding the port where I should expect to find the ship. The latter contingency had occurred, and by this time the *Queen of Night* must be nearing Cagliari, whence in a few hours she would start for Alexandria, and commence that portion of the voyage over which hung the foreshadowing of such dreadful mystery.

Collecting sense enough to hurl a few natural anathemas at the clerk, I left the office and walked slowly back towards the hotel.

One ray of comfort was alone granted to me. I remembered that Pisa, where Kennard and Vizard had both so mysteriously disappeared, was the junction with the short line running to Leghorn, and I reflected that if Vizard had got on board there, the detective would have had the chance of doing so too.

I hoped frantically that he had availed himself of it, and that his non-communication with me was due to his having gone to those who needed his protection so much more urgently. This thought, however, though it lifted a little off my load, did not compensate me for being left high and dry where I was powerless myself to aid, and directly I reached the hotel I inquired if there were any boats leaving for Cagliari which would give me a chance of catching up the

Queen of Night before she sailed. Again I met with a rebuff. The day was Thursday. The steamer for Sardinia would not leave till Saturday.

I went up to my room well-nigh in despair, and racked with doubt whether I had better go to the Consulate or try the Italian police authorities. I had nearly, after my last experience, decided in favour of the latter when a waiter knocked at the door and said that a signor—an English signor—was inquiring for me below. Who my visitor could be, unless it was either Kennard or Vizard, I had no idea, but, glad at the prospect of any sort of change from blank inaction, I gave orders for him to be instantly shown up.

Half a minute later I was more mystified than ever, for on the individual, who came tripping obsequiously into the room, I had certainly never set eyes before. He was a middle-aged, rather dissipated-looking, shabbily-dressed man, whose nationality at first sight would have been a mystery if it had not been announced.

Stranger though he was, there was something about him as he entered that struck a recent chord in my memory, and I scrutinised him more closely to see if I was confronted with yet another disguise. But the notion was no sooner formed than it was dispelled by the discovery of what had seemed familiar in him. It was the shining top of his dome-shaped bald head which had recalled the similar one seen by me an hour before over the screen in Volpe's office; and, suspicious as I was growing of everything and everybody, I recognised that it would be ridiculous to assume that it was the same.

He advanced into the room, smiling and rubbing his hands, and the moment he opened his mouth he chased away all inclination to confound him with anyone else.

"I come from Mr. Kennard," he said. "I saw him in Leghorn yesterday morning shortly before he went aboard the *Queen of Night*, and he took advantage of my being a fellow-countryman of yours to intrust me with a message to you. He said I should probably find you at one of the hotels facing the Bay."

"Pray sit down, sir, and make yourself comfortable," I said, wheeling a chair for him. "I have been most anxious about Mr. Kennard, and at my wits' end as to how to communicate with him. Did he say anything of the circumstances under which we parted at Pisa?"

"Not a word, and for the reason that there was no time," replied my visitor.

"I made Mr. Kennard's acquaintance quite casually in a hotel at Leghorn ten minutes before he was going on board. Finding that I was coming on to Naples he asked me to make inquiries for you in the hotels along the sea front, and to tell you in these words that the ship's programme having been altered he thought it best to go in her, especially as he had ascertained that a certain person—you would understand who—had gone on board. He concluded by begging me to urge you to join him at Cagliari, even if you had to hire a special boat to get there, as he had every hope at that port of bringing matters to an



Came tripping obsequiously into the room.

issue, and of inducing certain mutual friends, I think he said, to leave the ship."

This was good news indeed. The person alluded to as having gone on board at Leghorn was evidently Vizard; but neither he nor Zavertal would be half so dangerous with the detective at hand to watch their every move. A great deal would depend, however, on whether he was on board in his own character for still successfully disguised as the old American general, and I questioned my visitor as to how Mr. Kennard was dressed.

"You require proof of my having met Mr. Kennard?" he said, showing at once by his manner that he had put upon my question a construction I had not intended it to bear. The information he brought tallied

so exactly with my previous surmise, and with what I had learned at Volpe's office, that to doubt him after he had made his statement never crossed my mind, and I hastened to disclaim any such intention.

"I am glad to hear you say that," he replied, "for it would be hard to meet with such a reception after going to the expense of considerable time and trouble to do a service to strangers. I am sorry to say that I suffer from shortness of sight, and did not take particular notice of your friend's costume. By the way, allow me to rectify an omission—I should have introduced myself on entering. My name is Matthew Mayfield. I am a missionary working among the English sailors who frequent Italian ports."

I should certainly never have guessed Mr. Mayfield's profession from his appearance, though I had had enough experience of long-shore preachers to know that they do not usually wear purple and fine linen. The disclosure of his avocation inspired me with a new idea, and I promptly asked him if he knew of any private boat on the point of sailing for Cagliari, or which could be chartered for that purpose at a moderate figure. I had taken the precaution on the previous day to wire home to the bankers who had my modest savings in their charge, and they had cabled back a credit of two hundred pounds for me to their local agents. I was willing, nay eager, to spend every penny of it in getting to Cagliari.

But Mr. Mayfield shook his head. "A sailing vessel could easily be procured at a small sum to put you across to the island, but it would not take less than two and a half days under the most favourable conditions of wind and tide. That, I understand, would be too late to catch the *Queen of Night*. There are no small steamers here disengaged which could be got ready for sea at such short notice."

Polishing the top of his shining head with a red handkerchief, he rose as if to go, then flopped down in his chair again, tapping his forehead and knitting his brows with the



Tapping his forehead and knitting his brows.

air of a man who was trying to remember. "Yes, it was this evening," he said aloud to himself at last. "My dear sir," he went on, "it is just possible that I may be of assistance to you after all. There is a steam yacht here belonging to a London gentleman named Smith. She is named the *Miranda*, and I know her skipper, Captain Dicey, very well. But what is more to the point, I believe that she is under orders from the owner to proceed to Cagliari this very night. Mr. Smith is not on board, as he purposes joining the yacht in Sardinia, where he has been shooting while she came to Naples to refit. I think I can induce Captain Dicey to give you a passage—on the quiet—for a ten-pound note or so."

"He shall have twenty if he will put me across," I said eagerly, "and twenty more if he gets me there before the *Queen of Night* leaves. Will you see him, Mr. Mayfield, and place me under an eternal obligation?"

"I will go at once," was the reply, "it is one of the sweetest pleasures vouchsafed to us poor labourers in the vineyard to befriend our fellow-countrymen in their need. It is now nearly one. Expect me back in an hour from now."

And he went out, leaving me wondering at the combination of so much disinterested goodness with an extremely unprepossessing exterior.

CHAPTER XVII.

UNDER THE SWING LAMP.

I WAS not destined to improve my acquaintance with Mr. Matthew Mayfield. I would give a good deal for a quiet half-hour's interview with him now in some room with the door locked and the key thrown out of the window; but on that eventful day I was ungrateful enough to be just as pleased with the greasy note he sent me at the end of the hour as I should have been with his reappearance in person. I am afraid I regarded him rather too lightly as a means to an end, and though, within limits, I was right, I came nigh to paying dearly for my disrespect.

The note ran as follows:

DEAR SIR,—I have been called away to visit a dying seaman—poor fellow, I fear he is unrepentant—at the far end of the Bay, and shall therefore not be able to give myself the pleasure of waiting upon you.

But in the meanwhile I have seen Captain Dicey of the *Miranda*, and he will be willing to oblige you on the terms mentioned. The yacht is lying off the Little Mole, and will sail for Cagliari punctually at six this evening. You should be on board in plenty of time, as Dicey says he can't wait. The run will take about twenty-five hours, and you thus stand a great chance of finding the *Queen of Night* still off the port. Wishing you a speedy passage and a happy reunion with your friends, also assuring you of the privilege which I feel it to have been of service to you,—I remain, yours obediently,

MATTHEW MAYFIELD.

P.S.—Captain Dicey is an excellent fellow, and as honest as the day, but of course, as the master of a small steam yacht, is not a man of much culture and refinement.

"Culture and refinement be hanged, so long as he runs me across to Cagliari before the *Queen* leaves the island," I cried, and I hurried off to the hotel bureau to square my account and give up my room. My baggage did not trouble me, since I had nothing but a few articles I had purchased for present requirements, and these were comfortably stowed in a hand-bag. Having made my small preparations I found that I had still three hours to kill before the yacht sailed, and I decided that a portion at least of the time might be profitably spent in the selection and purchase of a revolver, for I did not know what was before me when I should again stand face to face with Zavertal and Vizard.

I went for the purpose to the shops on the Strada Chiaja, and after providing myself with a very good weapon, strolled along to the Little Mole to have a look at the *Miranda*. With my limited capabilities for asking my way, I had some little difficulty in finding her among the crowds of shipping, and when I did I can't say that I thought much of her.

She was very small, being under a hundred tons, and her appearance did not suggest that the refit she had been undergoing had been very extensive. A couple of swarthy sailors, certainly not Englishmen, were busy furbishing up

her dingy brass work, and a stream of smoke from a black and rather rusty funnel showed that the fires were alight and steam in process of being got up. After all, the capabilities of her engine-room were what I was most

interested in, and though the boat was anything but the smart craft I had expected, there was nothing to show that she was not fast.

By a frequent repetition of the word "Capitano" I managed to make one of the sailors understand that I wanted the Captain, and being informed by gesture that he was on shore, I decided to take a walk in the neighbourhood till he should put in an appearance.



Was hurriedly putting on his hat.

Turning into a by-street in the crowded part at the back of the harbour, I was reminded by the sight of a small restaurant that I had been too occupied to think of food since breakfast, and I went in and sat down at one of the small tables.

The room was a long one, with a door at the far end forming a second entrance from another street, and at that hour was unoccupied, save by the waiters, and by a couple of customers seated together over a bottle of wine at a distant table. The pair being separated from me by the length of the room, I did not, on entering, pay any attention to them; but, after giving my order, and while waiting to be served, I allowed my eyes to stray their way.

One of them had arisen, and was hurriedly putting on his hat previous to departure. A second later he had vanished through the door near him into the street, but not before I had intercepted a furtive glance cast at myself, and had recognised in the fugitive Mr. Matthew Mayfield, the long-shore missionary who had procured me passage in the *Miranda*, and who, according to his own statement, ought to have been soothing the last moments of a dying seaman at the further side of the Bay.

I attributed his hasty flight and evident desire to avoid me to a not unnatural dislike to have the discrepancy detected. I cannot say that the sight of him hobnobbing there in a restaurant so far from his supposed sphere of duty caused me actual uneasiness, but it certainly made me look at his companion with an interest I should not otherwise have felt. The now solitary occupant of the distant table sat still, steadily finishing the bottle of wine, and, I suppose, not having Mayfield's reason, evinced no concern in me or in my affairs.

He was a heavy, squat-built man of the bull-dog type, and though he was too far off for me to note more than the outline of his features, or to judge of his expression, he gave me the general idea of his being what is known as an "ugly customer." Not much was to be learned from his shabby, ill-fitting suit of blue serge, and from the unbraided cheese-cutter cap he was wearing, except that he was a seafarer of not very exalted rank; and I ticked him off as the engineer, or mate of a tramp steamer.

Having outstayed Mr. Matthew Mayfield by some five minutes, he slouched heavily through the further door and disappeared.

By the time I had finished my refreshment and paid the

score it was five o'clock, and I made my way back to the Mole in the hope that the master of the *Miranda* had come aboard. The sailors had knocked off work and were lounging in the bows, where they had been joined by a third man, also an Italian, and, from his greasy, smoke-begrimed clothes, probably the combined engineer and fireman of this curiously manned and much-worn "yacht."

On this occasion my appearance at the gang-plank seemed to excite some interest among the crew, and almost before I sang out my one word of inquiry—"Capitano?"—one of them rose and shouted through a skylight, the others eyeing me strangely the while. The man's summons met with an answering hail from below, and immediately a head was protruded from the companion-hatch that caused me something of a shock. The reason was this: the head belonged to the rough-and-tumble individual whom I had seen half an hour before in the restaurant *tête-à-tête* with Mayfield.

"Cap'n Forrester?" he sang out.

"Yes; I am here by arrangement with Mr. Mayfield," I replied.

He turned and put his head back into the companion-hatch for two seconds, then came right out on deck and invited me to step aboard.

"You won't find no luxuries on this 'ere steam-yacht," he added, as I crossed the plank, "but she's a demon to go."

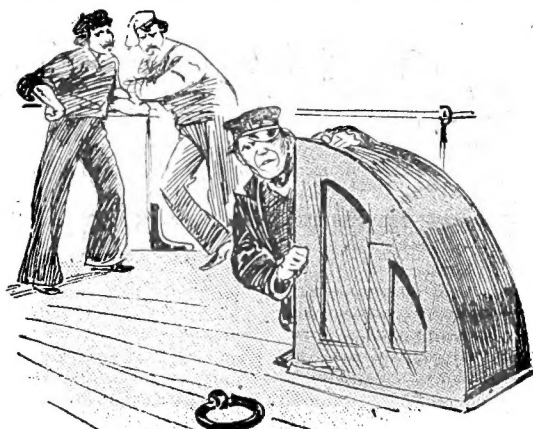
"You are Captain Dicey, I suppose?" I said, as he received me with a rough hand-shake.

"That's me—likewise not much to look at, but a demon to go," was his reply. "You're prepared to hand over the dibs, 'cording to contract?"

I put the stipulated amount in his grimy hand, and was proceeding to assure him that he should have another twenty pounds on landing, provided I caught the *Queen of Night*, when he cut me short with the remark that he made no blooming doubt about hooking the balance; it was as good as in his pocket already.

"And now, seeing as the cargo's aboard, there's nothing to hinder us getting under weigh," he added. "You just amuse yourself while I do the needful, and when we're clear of port I'll show you your bunk and the saloon."

Going forward, he shouted to his crew in Italian, and when they were at their posts the mooring rope was cast off.



"Cap'n Forrester?" he sang out.

and we were soon steaming across the Bay towards the declining sun. Dicey himself steered from the small erection, hardly to be called a bridge, forward of the funnel, and seating myself in the stern I paid critical attention to the

steaming capacity of the vessel. The opinion I formed, as soon as we were at "full speed ahead," was that the phrase "a good 'un to go" as applied to the *Miranda* was a decided misnomer. Her engines were better than might have been expected from her dilapidated appearance, but she certainly was not fast, and I began to grow anxious as to the result of the attempt to head off my enemies.

On other grounds, too, a feeling of uneasiness stole over me, now that I had time to calmly consider the circumstances under which I found myself on this strange craft. I had not been much smitten with Mr. Matthew Mayfield's manners and appearance, and it had only been the service he came to render that reconciled me to him. My confidence in him had received a rude shock in his desire to avoid me at the restaurant, and really, now that I came to think of it, had his account of himself been correct, there would have been no reason for such avoidance. He would, if everything had been above-board, have made some excuse for his change of plans and have come forward to introduce me to Dicey.

Again, the *Miranda* and her crew opened up a wide field of conjecture that was not very reassuring. The vessel might have been used as a yacht at some early stage in her history, but there was certainly nothing about her to show that she had been "in commission" lately. She gave me more the impression of a superannuated steamer that had been "laying up" for sale, and that she had been hurriedly prepared for sea at short notice.

The hands, too, with the exception of the skipper, were all Italians, which, to say the least of it, was an incongruity in an English-owned yacht, and was a good deal more in accordance with the theory that the boat had been hired or purchased for a special purpose. If so, what was that purpose likely to be? Was it possible that Mayfield and Dicey were emissaries of Vizard and Zavertal, charged with the duty of luring me into another trap?

These unpleasant reflections were interrupted by the approach of one of their subjects. We were now fast leaving the land, and the lights of the port, just beginning to twinkle in the fast gathering twilight, would be soon left far behind. Dicey gave the helm to one of the men, and came lurching aft, a figure far more suggestive of a waterside bully or loafer than of a gentleman's sailing master.

"Now, Cap'n, maybe you'd like to go below for a bite and a sup," he said. "I'm on board wages, and the steward is on leave, so there's no table-cloths nor finger-glasses, you understand."

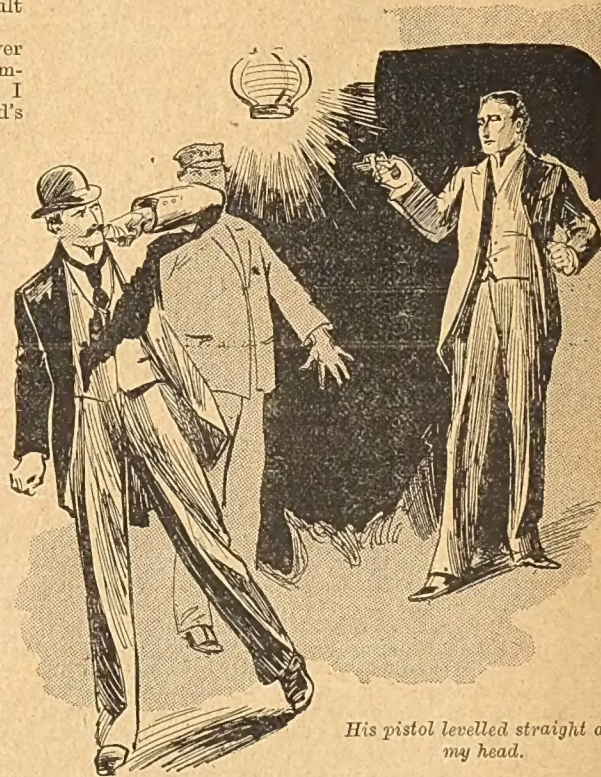
I should rather think there were no table-cloths and finger glasses in the mouldy, evil-smelling den into which he ushered me, and probably never had been. The cuddy was not more than fifteen feet long, and the narrow, ladder-like stair ran straight down into it. A couple of cabins on either side blocked all source of daylight except such as filtered through the dusty skylight, and now that night was falling, only the bare desolation of the place was visible. Dicey kicked open the door of one of the cabins, which, so far as I could see, was devoid of all furniture save a bed-place and a bench.

"There's your quarters," he said. "Hold on while I light the cuddy lamp, so as you can stow your bag."

There was a certain tremor, not exactly nervous, but rather of eagerness, in his voice that somehow put me on my guard against I knew not what. It was as though he had been working up to a crisis which was now at hand and he wished to be through with it. At least, that was the way it took me in my suspicious frame of mind, and it had the effect of making me follow him out of the cabin into the cuddy while he lit the lamp. I had already registered an intention to spend the night on deck; for the narrow cabin, barely five feet across, was too much of a *cul-de-sac* for a man labouring under my apprehensions to be left

alone in, even for a minute. I had got the feeling that I wanted to see all that went on on board the *Miranda*, and, above all, to be ready.

Dicey's stumpy, grime-stained fingers fumbled with a



His pistol levelled straight at my head.

match-box, and soon the swing-lamp over the centre table broke into a brilliant glow that for the moment dazzled me, falling as it did full across my face. Then, while my eyes were still struggling with the sudden glare, Dicey stepped quickly back from me, and a sternly melodious voice from the darkness of the recess behind the mast told me that the crisis had indeed come.

"So, Forrester, my friend," came the well-remembered tones, "the next time I promised you has arrived, you see, in spite of your clumsy efforts to postpone it."

And then my eyes, grown accustomed to the change of light at last, fastened on Vizard standing not eight feet away, his pistol levelled straight at my head, while Dicey flattened himself against the wall to let the bullet pass.

(To be continued.)

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ALCOHOLISM AND OBESITY.

It is often rashly asserted that drunkenness is uncommon on the European Continent, and that, in particular, it is a rare vice in France. Certain medical therapeutists and specialistic scientists have, however, recently furnished some suggestive statistics which flatly contradict the cherished beliefs of those who have persistently proclaimed the sobriety of the French people. Dr. Lancereaux, at the French Academy of Medicine, having made a special study of the subject, declares that in his extensive hospital practice out of twenty patients ten are, on an average, suffering from some form of alcoholic poisoning—women being responsible for a large proportion of the enormous consumption of alcohol thus indicated. The learned doctor sums up the results on the population at large as representing a mortality greater than that caused by the greatest epidemics, the ruin of labour, and—what is already startlingly evident in France—the steady diminution of the very population of the country. Other authorities, again, assert that with the annual increase in the consumption of spirits, to the extent of nearly 500,000 gallons in various liquors, there has been a corresponding increase of corpulence. This appears to make alcohol responsible for the troublesome and sometimes dangerous increase of unhealthy adipose tissue on the strength of the somewhat slipshod theory of the affinity of alcohol for oxygen in the system. It is certainly worthy of note that some of the most eminent authorities on the Continent and in America absolutely debar the corpulent from drinking alcohol in any shape or form, while on the other hand one of the most prominent and successful specialists in England boldly and flatly contradicts, on this point, his professional brethren. He permits those undergoing his treatment to drink the spirits of their choice—although he does not advocate the use of these beverages. The result of his experiments is that he can reduce a person's weight from 3lb. to 6lb. in a week, although the patient may drink alcohol even to excess; nor will any extra decrease in weight be experienced by a restriction of the amount of drink consumed. His aim is to attack corpulence at its very root, and to achieve this he does not approve of such a drastic measure as the sudden and indiscriminate stoppage of a person's accustomed spirituous drink; for there are many who have so habitually used themselves to their "dram" that its prohibition is unquestionably a great hardship, if not actually dangerous. Again, he takes exception to the action of the majority of specialists in dealing with obesity, in prescribing a limited diet. To this he takes exception on the very reasonable ground (to quote from his clever 256-page book, entitled "Corpulency, and the Cure," by F. C. Russell, Woburn House, Store Street, Bedford Square, London, W.C.), that with the reduction of fat by his process, the most unhealthy portion of this excess tissue, such as those which clog the vital organs, begin to waste first, and, as a consequence, the entire system becomes healthier within the first twenty-four hours of the treatment. Then immediately the patient begins to be exhilarated by such symptoms as the freedom of breathing, the stronger and steadier action of the heart, the feeling of lightness, the absence of the sense of oppression—each organ performing its duty with increased regularity. He finds himself aroused suddenly from a lethargic heaviness and morbid drowsiness which have probably lasted for years; he feels, as it were, born anew, and instantly becomes more active and buoyant, both in body and mind—all of which pleasurable sensations are naturally accompanied by an increase of appetite. It is not necessary to be a scientist or a medical expert to adopt the common sense view of these matters. "Would you, then," argues Mr. Russell, "in the case of a person who for years, perhaps, has never known what a healthy appetite means, deprive him of food when Nature appealingly holds forth her hands, literally begging for it? No! those who reduce fat by starvation pay for their folly at usurers' interest when meeting the bills drawn against them on the Bank of Longevity. Let other specialists prescribe this; I will not countenance it," says Mr. Russell. Notwithstanding the increased amount of food taken daily, the weight, under the operation of his system, is steadily reduced, to which unerring testimony is given by the weighing-machine. The painstaking research and the marvellous success of the author of the above-named work justify us in arriving at the conclusion that his system may be followed with absolute confidence. His success is all the more remarkable because the whole secret consists in the use of a few herbal roots and a simple vegetable acid. We believe it is the only system of reducing obesity—and it is a very pleasant system—which is certain in its results and brings no after-penalties. We commend his book to our readers. It may be obtained post free by sending six penny stamps to Mr. Russell at the address already given.—*Brighton Examiner*, August 9th, 1895.

WORDS THAT FIT THE FACTS.

"HORRID" and "hateful" are (particularly) women's words. The man who has not noticed this fact is a dunce—like the majority of his sex. As the women use them, these two words have a cutting edge—an appropriateness, a certain snugness of fit not seen in the dictionaries. You will come upon these words in Milton, Dryden, and other old English authors, who knew how to select their verbal tools from the great chest of our noble language. And what *they* knew by craft, *bright women* know by their keen sense of the truth of things.

Now, in a woman's letter here at hand is a sentence ending with these three words—"that horrid dyspepsia." It is a photograph, which, as Wilkie Collins says, "is justice without mercy."

Have you, who now read what is here set down, ever had this dyspepsia, or have you got it now? Yes? Then you will accept Mrs. Pallister's pat adjective. In the proper definition of "horrid" we have the elements of fear and disgust. Is that right, too? Yes.

"In May, 1890," she says, "I suffered greatly from indigestion. My appetite was poor, and after everything I ate I was troubled with pain and weight in the chest. No matter how light and simple my diet was, I had just the same unpleasant and painful feeling. My stomach turned against everything, and, as a consequence, I became very weak and feeble.

"Month after month I remained in this condition. I used the various so-called remedies commonly prescribed for indigestion, but none of them relieved me.

"In the following September a friend strongly recommended me to try Mother Seigel's Curative Syrup, and in obedience thereto I procured a supply from a near-by chemist. It gives me pleasure to report the result, and perhaps I ought to have done so long ago. After taking the Syrup for one week only, I experienced great relief. My appetite improved and my food agreed

with me. Cheered and encouraged, I continued to use it, and in a few weeks found myself completely free from pain; and, indeed, from all the symptoms which attended this most vexatious and wearing of complaints.

"In evidence of the thorough and radical character of my cure, I may mention that although it took place over four years ago, I have since had no return of that horrid dyspepsia.

"My husband, who has suffered from time to time with a painful form of liver derangement and indigestion, seeing what Mothers Seigel's Syrup did for me, tried it, and has found immediate benefit from taking only a few doses. We both commend it to all our friends who suffer from indigestion and dyspepsia, and the local ailments arising therefrom. We know many persons who have derived the greatest benefit from its use after the doctors have failed to help them. I feel confident that a vast amount of suffering might be prevented if this remedy were more widely known. And in hope that my short letter may be of use in that direction, I freely accord you permission to make it public. (Signed) Rose Emily Pallister, Jubilee House, Long Clawson, Leicestershire, November 7th, 1894."

We should mention that this lady is the wife of the Reverend William Pallister, the Wesleyan Minister of Long Clawson.

As to making Mother Seigel's Syrup more widely known, we are constantly doing our best to that end. Probably it is already more widely known than any other medicine in the world. Accounts of it are printed in all languages all over the earth, and yet millions of sufferers from "that horrid dyspepsia" remain to be reached. But even more than the printers we thank the *women* for heralding the name of Seigel's Syrup from town to town and from door to door. What *they* say goes farther and abides longer than what *we* say, for they know what "that horrid dyspepsia" is and how surely this remedy cures it.